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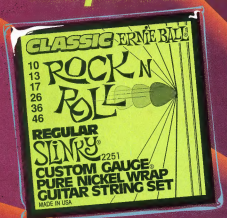

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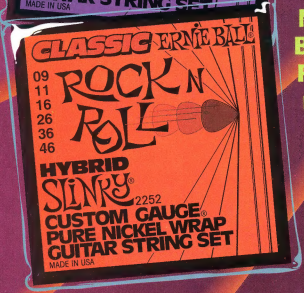

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VOL. 15, NO. 5 MAY 1995

CONTENTS

15 YEARS OF GUITAR WORLD

THE INTERVIEWS

12 RANDY RHOADS
14 FRANK ZAPPA
16 EDWARD VAN HALEN
23 STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN
26 KEITH RICHARDS
29 YNGWIE MALMSTEEN
39 STEVE VAI & JOE SATRIANI
45 FLEA
49 KURT COBAIN
54 ZZ TOP
56 SPINAL TAP
58 DIMEBAG DARRELL
61 GEDDY LEE & LES CLAYPOOL
65 JAMES HETFIELD & TONY IOMMI
73 BRIAN MAY
82 ANGUS YOUNG
86 DAVID GILMOUR
90 ERIC CLAPTON
96 NEIL YOUNG
99 B.B. KING & ERIC JOHNSON
102 ACE FREHLEY
109 JIMMY PAGE
116 THE DOORS' ROBBY KRIEGER
120 THE ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND
129 PETE TOWNSHEND

THE MUSIC

131 15 CLASSIC LICKS
The most unforgettable riffs of the past 15 years transcribed.

TRANSCRIPTIONS BASSLINES INCLUDED!
138 "IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT"–R.E.M.
149 "CREEPING DEATH"–Metallica
162 "THE MAN WHO SOLD THE WORLD"–Nirvana
169 "ERUPTION"–Van Halen

THE LISTS

35 ESSENTIAL CLASSIC ROCK ALBUMS
53 ESSENTIAL HARDCORE ALBUMS
77 ESSENTIAL ALTERNATIVE ALBUMS
107 ESSENTIAL METAL ALBUMS
125 ESSENTIAL BLUES ALBUMS
174 15 YEARS OF METAL DETECTOR

THE GEAR

192 15 YEARS OF GEAR
The most important developments in guitar technology
PLUS: NEW GEAR FOR '95

COVER PHOTO COLLAGE BY MICHAEL SEXTON

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THE WOODSHED

HERE'S TO OUR SUCK-CESS!

It's our 15th anniversary. Normally, this would be the time to tootle Guitar World's horn and pat ourselves on the back for being the world's best-selling musician's magazine. Or maybe gloat a little about recent exclusive interviews with Eric Clapton, R.E.M., Pink Floyd, The Artist Formerly Known As Prince and Van Halen. And, of course, there's our 24-hour guitar hot line on CompuServe. . .

Instead, I'd like to start this special issue with a heartfelt birthday greeting: "We suck."

Yes, that's right. There is no getting around it. We suck and we're not afraid to admit it.

Of course, the fact that we suck will come as no shock to you, our readers. You tell us as much in the letters we print dutifully every month in our Sounding Board. In fact, not a single day goes by without us receiving at least one note explaining exactly where, how and why we manage to bungle each and every issue.

And how we bungle them! Sometimes we forget to cover a particular guitarist. Sometimes we cover the right one, but leave out some crucial detail. The blues junkies hate our coverage of metal. The metal heads hate our Seattle stuff. And most recently we've enraged the punks...by writing about punk. Go figure.

But that's cool. It's actually beyond cool—it's what keeps us at the top of our game. Love letters are always appreciated, but the hate mail is what keeps the fire in our collective bellies. It drives us to be more creative, entertaining and interesting. In our own twisted way, we actually enjoy trying to please every last reader—even the psychopathic bastard who mailed us a paper mache replica of Dimebag Darrell's head last month.

So why do we care? Are we gluttons for punishment? Just plain sick? Trying desperately to hang on to our jobs? Yes, yes, and yes. But I'd also like to think we're driven by the fact that we've never really considered GW to be our magazine. It's really yours, spiced with a little of what we like and what we think you'll find interesting. It's a formula that has kept us around for 15 years, and with a little luck will keep us going for 15 more.

We hope this issue will please even the most discriminating, and discriminatory, reader. Inside, we have assembled, for your pleasure, some of Guitar World's finest moments. Narrowing a decade-and-a-half's worth of material into one issue was very difficult, of course, so we decided to focus on some of our more memorable interviews. To add some historical perspective, we've included several essential listening guides, Alan di Perna's concise guide to guitar innovations and Andy Aledort's riff retrospective.

What more could any guitarist want? I'm sure you'll let us know.

—BRAD TOLINSKI
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Mark Marek

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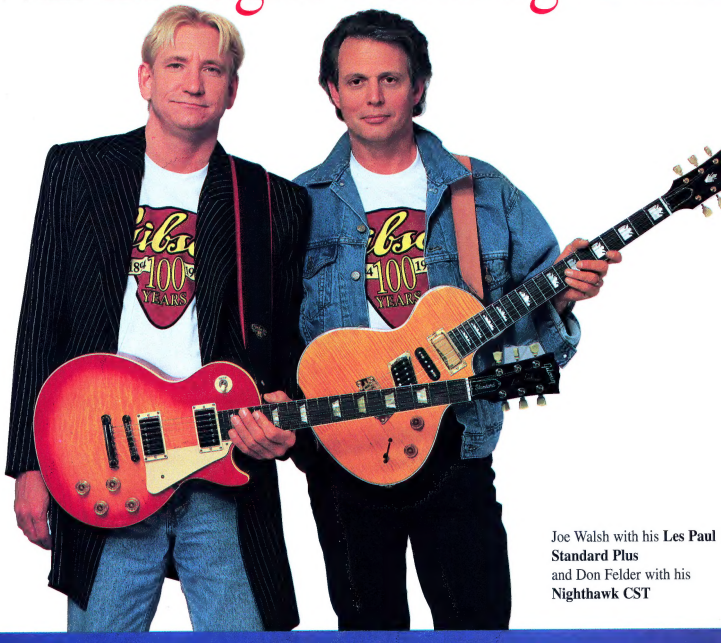

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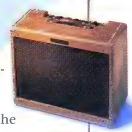

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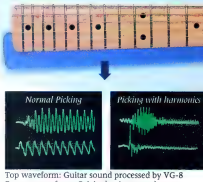

Top waveform: Guitar sound processed by VG-8
Bottom waveform: Original guitar sound

With Harmonic Restructure Modeling (HRM) the VG-8 processes the actual waveform created by each string's vibration and restructures the harmonic content in real time without triggering or delay. No two players sound alike. This lets you create unbelievable new sounds without taking the creativ expression of your playing style out of your hands.

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FRANK ZAPPA

"You have heard all of the nice bent notes. You have heard clean playing, accurate playing...I don't give a shit about that stuff. I want to play what's on my mind."

BY JOHN SWENSON

PHOTOGRAPHY BY BARON WOLMAN

GUITAR WORLD: How do you feel about the current state of your guitar playing?

FRANK ZAPPA: I'm playing my ass off. It has definitely improved.

GW: Is there a point where you can actually feel yourself jumping beyond anything you were capable of in the past?

ZAPPA: Well, the funny thing about the way I play is that I never practice. And every time a tour ends and I put my guitar away, I don't touch it until the next season's rehearsals. And every time I pick it up it's like learning to play all over again. I don't have any calluses, it hurts, I can't bend the string, the guitar feels too heavy when I put it on.

I just had a nine-month layoff where I lost all my technique. Then, suddenly, one night I didn't have a problem. I just went out there on stage and started blasting away. I think I've actually exceeded my goals on a couple of nights.

GW: Can you describe how that feels?

ZAPPA: Well, it's great. You get to the point where you know you have just said something that nobody has ever heard before. And it's recorded—you can play it for someone later and say, "Would you believe that on such and such a night, at such and such a time, under these circumstances, this occurred?"

I am looking for things that are unlikely. Rhythmic events that are unlikely. Melodic events that are unlikely. You've already heard all of the good licks that all the good guitar players play. You've already heard every pentatonic scale there ever was. You have heard all the chromatic scales there ever were. You've heard the Aeolian mode played with a muted palm of the hand. You have heard all of the nice bent notes. You have heard clean playing, accurate playing. You have heard it all. I don't give a shit about that stuff. I want to play what's on my mind, and I think I succeed when I can directly convert my compositional idea into sound patterns right there on stage. And if the rest of the band accompanies that properly so that it supports the musical idea, then I did it.

But there's a lot of variables, because it means that everyone on stage has to hear each other enough and everybody else's musical imagination is tuned into what I'm doing. You don't have any go-for-yourselfers out there, because that is what usually ruins a solo—the drummer overplays, or the bass player or keyboardist overplays. If they don't have enough sensitivity to what I'm doing or if they aren't smart enough to track the direction I'm going in, it's like dragging an anchor.

GW: Does it bother you that are not revered as a great guitar player?

ZAPPA: But I *am* revered as a great guitar player by at least four or five people. And that's better than none.

GW: What I meant is that, whereas somebody like Eddie Van Halen can become a big star....

ZAPPA: Eddie Van Halen is a good guitar player. He's entitled to all the adulation he can acquire. There's a lot of good guitar players out there. But I'll guarantee you that I am the only person doing what I am doing. Because I don't approach it as a guitar star. I go out there to play compositions. I want to take a chord change or a harmonic climate and build a composition on the spur of the moment that makes sense, that takes some chances. That goes some place where nobody else wanted to go, that says things that nobody else wanted to say, that represents my musical personality. That has some emotional content that speaks to the people who want to hear it. And the ones who don't want to hear it, who don't like guitar stuff, can forget it; it will be over in a minute and I'll be back to another part of the song. That's what it's all about.

GW MARCH 1982

Actually, a lot of people can't stand to hear me play the guitar because of my unusual use of rhythm. You know, everybody wants to tap their foot, and when I go crazy they lose continuity. They can't count it, they can't think it, they can't feel it—so they just totally reject it. They want that nice, safe, straight up and down stuff. And there is tons of it to go around. Just don't come to me for it.

GW: A lot of people who were once completely mystified by your music have caught up to it.

ZAPPA: Some people have caught up to it to the point where they can tell that it's music; they don't immediately reject it anymore. But whether they have caught up to it to the point where they can comprehend it is a matter for further discussion. Because I don't think they really understand it—I don't think they know *why* it's done or how it works. I don't think they want it to work, because if they understood what was really going on, then they would have to reject everything else. Because I think what I am doing is the best solution to the musical problems that are set up at the time. I am going for optimum solutions to musical problems. And I think I am doing it the right way.

I am providing good solutions. Okay, I think other people are providing really safe, really boring, but entirely competent solutions. To me, a lot of other people sound like the aural equivalent of a clowns-on-velvet painting. You know what I mean? If you have a piece of blank, black velvet and wanted to solve the problem of it being blank, you'd paint a nice clown on there. *Somebody* obviously likes that stuff. And there it is for them. That is not my solution. I'm going for something else. ●

RANDY RHOADS

"I started tuning up and Ozzy said, 'You've got the gig.'"

BY JOHN STIX

ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL MORENKO

GUITAR WORLD: After years of performing in clubs, what's it like to play in large arenas?

RANDY RHOADS: It's totally strange. I've still got my past in me. I'm trying to mature into all this, but I don't have my feet on the ground at all.

GW: Who's been your biggest influence?

RHOADS: My mother. She was the one who pushed me all the time. She even helped me with my equipment.

GW: You were a guitar teacher. Did teaching affect your playing at all?

RHOADS: I learned more from teaching the guitar than by doing anything else. More than often, students wanted to learn note-for-note solos by their favorite players. That's when I started to learn other people's licks.

GW: What kind of advice did you offer your students?

RHOADS: The main thing...is to take it as it comes. Don't try to do too much too soon. You've got to get to know your own style.

GW: How would you assess your work on *Blizzard Of Ozz* (Jet, 1980) and *Diary Of A Madman* (Jet, 1981)?

RHOADS: On the first album none of us had ever played together, so it was everything at once. We were putting the band together, writing the songs and being in the studio, all at the same time. There was an exciting energy on *Blizzard Of Ozz*. We turned everything up to 10, and if it felt good we'd play it. We also had time to choose the best parts and record when it felt right.

Directly after making *Blizzard* we did a European tour, came back, and did *Diary*. There was no break. I didn't have time to sit back and think, "What do I want to do? What do I want to accomplish?" I was really short of ideas that I was interested in pursuing.

On *Diary* we put a lot more energy into the songwriting, so the songs are happening. But my guitar playing isn't. We were in a hurry to get over to the States and tour behind *Blizzard*, so *Diary* was rushed. We only had time to get a song's basic form before we had to record it. From a guitar standpoint, some parts of this record make me cringe. In fact, on "Little Dolls" I never got to take a real solo. What you hear on there is actually the guitar track—a dummy solo I laid down. A lot of my things on *Diary* lack feeling. It sounds a bit ordinary to me, like just sort of "play anything you can think of."

GW: How are you dealing with your newfound success?

RHOADS: I'm totally shocked that it happened. It changes everything—now I've got to get it together. It's a pressure where you've always got to be better than yourself, which is a difficult thing to be. The main thing I'm going through right now is figuring out how to get back to being a musician, more than being in a popular band. I just want to get back to being a player and get away from the distractions of my success.

Everything's happened so fast that I haven't had enough time to think about what I want to do. I have my own personality on the guitar but don't think I have my own style as yet. For instance, I do a solo guitar thing in concert, and I do a lot of the same licks as Eddie Van Halen. Eddie is a great player, but it kills me that I do that. For me it's just flash to impress the kids. I'm trying to make a name for myself as fast as I can. I wish I could take time and come up with something that nobody else has done. But that's gonna take a few years yet.

GW: Where do you turn for inspiration and new ideas?

RHOADS: I feel that a large element of my style is leaning toward more melodic playing. When I was taking classical lessons, it gave me a lot of ideas to turn into leads. Everything is totally different for me now. I was used to taking lessons and teaching all day long. I had constant musical input. New ideas were going in and out of my brain all the time. Being on the road so much, a lot of that input has stopped—and I worry about it. I was thinking of trying to teach myself classical guitar, but you know you do everything wrong. I want something to keep me alert to my playing. Right now I'm bored with my playing. I think, "Okay, you've got to sit down and play every day and you will stumble onto new things, and you will improve." It's just that right now, while I'm on the road, it's hard to put myself in that frame of mind. A classical tutor would be my commitment to keep at it.

GW: Have you ever considered doing session work and guest recording?

RHOADS: I was thinking that one of the great things for me would be to play on other people's records. It would be nice to be known for playing in different areas. Ozzy Osbourne is about as heavy metal as you can get, and as a result a lot of people don't know me. But I would like to play some light jazz things. I was never into heavy fusion music; I'm thinking more on the acoustic, melodic side.

At this point my weakness is my sound. I rely on it 100 percent. I don't go on stage with a lot of confidence. If the sound isn't right I'll get paranoid. I'm still learning what to feel on stage. It's totally different from playing in a club.

GW: What was auditioning for Ozzy like?

RHOADS: I had never looked for any auditions or gigs outside of what I was doing. Besides, I thought I would hurt my band. When I did go down, there were all these guys with Marshall stacks. I brought along a tiny practice amp. I started tuning up and Ozzy said, "You've got the gig." I didn't even get to play! ●

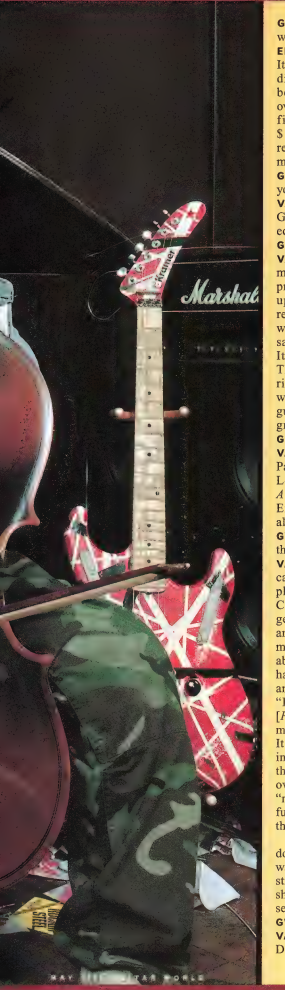
GW MAY 1982

EDDIE VAN HALEN

"What I wanted to do was fall off the edges of buildings."

BY STEVEN ROSEN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GLEN LA FERMAN



GUITAR WORLD: How old were you when you got your first guitar?

EDWARD VAN HALEN: About 12 or 13. It was a flamenco Spanish guitar, but I didn't really consider it my guitar; it belonged to my brother Al. I took it over when he started playing drums. My first electric guitar was a four-pickup $110 Teisco Del Rey from Sears. I remember wanting it because it had the most pickups.

GW: Did you feel anything special when you picked up the electric for the first time?

VAN HALEN: No, no message from God. It was just something I wanted—I thought it was neat.

GW: Did you get an amplifier, too?

VAN HALEN: A friend of my dad's made me my first amp. It was pretty cheap, and when I turned it up, it made a lot of noise. I remember Al walking in one time when I had the volume up and saying, "That sounds cool, man. It sounds like the guitar on 'Blues Theme,' by the Arrows." And he was right—it almost sounded identical. It was crappin' out, distorted and nasty. I guess that was my first exposure to that grungy sound.

GW: Who were your first guitar heroes?

VAN HALEN: I remember hearing Jimmy Page when a friend brought over the first Led Zeppelin album [Led Zeppelin, *Atlantic, 1969*]. And I tripped on it. Eric Clapton's work with Cream was also important.

GW: What was it about Clapton's playing that inspired you?

VAN HALEN: It wasn't Clapton specifically as much as it was the way Cream played live. I was intrigued by the way Clapton, Jack Bruce [*bassist*] and Ginger Baker [*drummer*] were able to twist and bend a 4/4 time signature to the ultimate extreme. There was something about them that I say about myself—they had a quality of falling down the stairs and landing on their feet. Just listen to "I'm So Glad," on *Goodbye Cream* [*Polydor, 1969*]. Incredible, man! To my mind, nothing has matched it to this day. It is totally reckless-abandon-but-knowing-where-you're-going. People used to think I was nuts to sit there and listen over and over to what they called "noise." Cream would go from total confusion to clicking together perfectly, and that blew me away.

Cream made music exciting in a way I don't think people really understood. It was almost as if the lyrics and actual song structure were secondary. "Let's get this shit over with so we can make music and see where we land tonight." I loved that.

GW: Does Van Halen take chances?

VAN HALEN: Al and I do all the time. Dave [*Lee Roth*] doesn't really like it and Mike [*Anthony*] isn't really plugged in with Al and me, so he kind of stops and lets us go crazy.

GW: When did you start playing in bands?

VAN HALEN: Ninth, tenth grade. Al and I played in a band called Mammoth. Then there was the Trojan Rubber Company. We also used to be called The Space Brothers.

GW: What were you playing at this time?

VAN HALEN: You name it: Grand Funk, Black Sabbath, Deep Purple, Cream...

GW: Was Gazarri's [*a local Hollywood club*] your first semi-professional gig?

VAN HALEN: It was a breakthrough, yes. You know, we got kicked out of clubs because I played too "psychedelic."

GW: You even had problems getting into Gazarri's?

VAN HALEN: Oh, yeah! We had to audition there at least three or four times. A guy would always come running up in the middle of a song because I was too loud. But I didn't play that loud deliberately. The amp only sounded like an amp if it was all the way up. So I did everything to mute it—from keeping the plastic cover on it to facing it against the walls to putting styrofoam padding in front of the speakers.

GW: Were you playing the homemade, one-pickup guitar at this point?

VAN HALEN: Not right in the beginning. I used to play a Les Paul and an ES-335. Later I bought a Strat, but the guys in the band didn't like it. They thought it sounded too thin. I said, "Okay, I'll take care of that." So I chiseled a hole in the body and slapped a humbucker in.

GW: Had you ever seen or heard of anyone customizing guitars like that?

VAN HALEN: Nah.

GW: When you changed from the Gibson to the Fender, did your style change?

VAN HALEN: I never understood that. Why should it? What's the difference—one less fret? I can get used to anything. I never understood why Fenders were considered harder to play, except that they have a little extra string tension when tuned to concert pitch. I never played in standard tuning anyway [*Ed. note: At the time, Van Halen usually tuned his guitar down one-half step.*] I just tune until the tension feels good. Who made up the rule that an A string had to vibrate at 440, anyway?

GW: Who made the body of your first custom guitar?

VAN HALEN: A company called Boogie. It was a junky, piece-of-shit body on the bottom of a stack of other bodies. It was a second. I gave the guy $50, bought a neck for $80, and went home and slapped them together; it wasn't that difficult. I painted it almost immediately because it had a wooden body, no finish.

GW JULY 1985

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GW: Why did you feel the need to build your own guitar? What were you searching for that you were unable to find in other guitars?

VAN HALEN: I guess I was trying to create a cross between a Gibson and a Fender—a humbucker sound with a Fender-type vibrato system. You couldn't really use Gibson tremolos to bend pitches. They wobbled, and what I wanted to do was fall off the edges of buildings.

GW: Do you remember the first time you played the guitar after it was assembled?

VAN HALEN: Yeah, it was neat. I thought, "You can't buy one of these!" I felt like I was on to something, and obviously I was.

GW: Is the guitar shown on the cover of the first album [Van Halen, *Warner Bros., 1978*] the one you built?

VAN HALEN: It's the same guitar I used on all the albums, and all the tours up until the *1984* tour. It was my baby until I started using the Kramers. For a while I was putting Kramer necks on that main guitar. For the second album [Van Halen II, *Warner Bros., 1979*], I had that black and yellow guitar [*pictured on the album's back cover*].

GW: Why did you change your guitar?

VAN HALEN: I don't know why I played that black and yellow one. I liked the way it looked, but I didn't like the way it sounded. Actually, I used an Ibanez Destroyer for a lot of *Van Halen*—the guitar that is on the *Women And Children First* [*Warner Bros., 1980*] cover. On all the stuff that didn't have any vibrato on it—"You Really Got Me," "On Fire," and the rhythm track of "Jamie's Cryin'"—I used the Ibanez, which has a PAF in it. It was one of the few guitars made out of Korina wood that you could get without spending an arm and a leg for an original "V" or something. It was a great-sounding guitar—until I took a chunk out of it to make it look nice, to make it look different. On the cover of *Women And Children First*, it's missing a piece. Boy, did I screw it up.

GW: It changed the sound?

VAN HALEN: Oh, completely! It ruined it. [*uproarious laughter*] It went from sounding like a nice, fat, warm guitar to "What the hell happened?" I couldn't believe it. The sound changed from a fat, Les Paul-type sound to a real weak Strat sound. I thought I'd ruined the pickup when I took the chunk of wood out, so I stuck in another pickup. But it sounded the same—real bad. I think it was because I took the wood out right by the bridge; that's where a lot of resonance

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and tone come from.

GW: What is the story about Angel almost releasing "You Really Got Me" before Van Halen did?

VAN HALEN: Yeah. A couple of guys from Angel were friends, acquaintances. One day—I forget where we were, it might have been the Rainbow—I was braggin' about our album, saying, "Hey, this is bad, you ought to listen to this." Because they had been talking about *their* new stuff. So we went up to [*Angel drummer*] Barry Brandt's house, and they were all blown away by the album. They were all listening very carefully to this and that, and I left there feeling really good and proud.

The next morning [*producer*] Ted Templeman called me up and said, "Did you play that tape for anybody?" And I said, "Yeah, I played it for all kinds of people!" He was pissed. I didn't know; nobody told me not to play it for anyone. I guess they figured I knew. And he said, "You asshole, why did you do that?" Because Ted heard through the grapevine that Angel went into the studio and was trying to put out a single of "You Really Got Me" before us.

GW: That really wouldn't have changed anything…

VAN HALEN: I think it could have hurt.

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[*laughs*] So we released it as soon as possible—even before the album was out, I think. We had performed that song live for years. When we recorded demo tapes with Ted and Donn [*Landee, engineer*], that was actually the last song we did. Ted asked, "Well, you got anything else?" And we said, "Well, we've got some cover tunes." He said, "Play 'em." It kind of bummed me out that Ted wanted our first single to be someone else's tune. I would have maybe picked "Jamie's Cryin'," just because it was our own.

GW: Did the success of "You Really Got Me" lead to your doing another cover for the second album?

VAN HALEN: I don't know how "You're No Good" came about. I guess it was Ted. He figured, "Hey, it worked the first time. Let's try it again." I really don't remember how it ended up being picked. I didn't even remember how the damn song went. We used to play it in the bars, at Gazarri's, but we didn't play it like that. We played it like the original [*Linda Ronstadt*] record.

I don't know how it came about that we used the song, but I know how this version came about. Ted hummed the tune to me, and that's how I came up with the riff; I was just trying to noodle my way through it to figure out the chords. We never listened to the record to learn it. So I don't even know if it's right or not.

GW: Placing an unaccompanied guitar solo on an album is very unusual. What made you decide to record "Eruption" on *Van Halen*?

VAN HALEN: Ted Templeman heard me practicing it for a show. He asked me, "What's that?" It never occurred to me to play it for him. I just didn't think it would be something we'd put on a record. He liked it, and everyone else agreed that we should throw it on.

I played it two or three times in the studio for the record, and we kept the one that seemed to flow the best. I still like the way it sounds; I've never heard a guitar sound like it. It's not that my playing was so great, it just sounds like some classical instrument. Donn Landee made it sound like more than it is, in a way.

GW: Van Halen is the yardstick by which every other rock band is measured. Is that because you write great songs?

VAN HALEN: What's a great song? Lots of people think a song without singing is not a song. Tell that to Beethoven and he'll kick your ass.

GW: Would you like to have been Beethoven?

VAN HALEN: I wouldn't want to have died at the age he did [*57*]. Anyone who wouldn't want to be as respected as he is would be a fool. But I'm happy being who I am—I wouldn't want to be anybody else. ●

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STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN

"You know, there's a big lie in this business—that it's okay to go out in flames."

BY BILL MILKOWSKI

GUITAR WORLD: You seem like a new man—focused and healthy.

STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN: I can honestly say that I'm really glad to be alive. Because, left to my own devices, I would've slowly killed myself.

GW: That's a very dramatic statement. What happened?

VAUGHAN: Back in the fall of 1986, I was completely out of gas; I could not give anymore. It was a real crazy period—I had a schedule that was completely out of hand. And the only reason I put up with it was because I thought I was superhuman. I mean, the whole deal is that when you walk on stage, you're up there bigger than life. People idolize you. And if you let that go to your head, you're in trouble. You have to keep things in perspective, but

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALDO MAURO

GW SEPTEMBER 1988

SRV

that's hard to do when you're high on cocaine.

But I began to see that the schedule was taking its toll. During that period I was touring and mixing *Live Alive* [*Epic, 1986*] simultaneously. My trick was to not sleep at all. I would stay in the studio all night, leave at noon, go to the hotel to grab a shower, go to the soundcheck and play the gig. Then I'd come back to the studio and the whole thing would start again. For two straight weeks I did that, and the only way I could see to deal with that was, "Oh, you're too tired? Well, here, snort some of this." And between the coke and the alcohol, it had gotten to the point where I no longer had any idea what it would take to get drunk. One day I would drink a quart, and then the next day all I'd have to do was drink one sip to get completely smashed.

I would wake up and guzzle something, just to get rid of the pain I was feeling. Whiskey, beer, vodka, whatever was handy. It got to the point where if I'd try to say "hi" to someone, I would just fall apart, crying and everything. It was like...solid doom. I'd been trying to pull myself up by my bootstraps, so to speak, but they were broken.

GW: Did anybody try to set you straight?

VAUGHAN: Eric Clapton tried, early on. He could sense that I wasn't ready, so he didn't push it. See, you can let somebody know what's going on, but if they're not ready you can't make 'em quit. They're gonna despise you for it and resent the fact that you tried to tell them how to live their life.

Eric and I met while we were both touring Australia. He was sober, and was really calm while I sat there downing two, three shots of Crown. And he just sort of wisely looked at me and said, "Well, sometimes you gotta go through that, don't cha?" If I had been ready to stop then and there, he would've gone on to the next part of it—but he understood that I wasn't. I wouldn't reach that point until I was literally falling off stages, two years later.

Albert King tried to talk to me, too. Once, we were doing a show together, and he came backstage and said, "We gonna have a heart-to-heart. I been watching you wrestle with that bottle three, four times already. I tell you what, man: I like to drink a little bit when I'm at home. But the gig ain't no time to get high." He was trying to tell me to take care of business, to give myself a break, but I did my usual deal of trying to act like I had it all together.

GW: What made you finally seek help?

VAUGHAN: I tore up my stomach real bad. I didn't realize that cocaine would crystallize in my belly and cut it up. Finally, I had a breakdown. I mean, everything fell apart. I had to give up to win, because I was in a losing battle. I finally checked myself into a clinic in London, in September of 1986.

GW: Has the meaning of music changed since you've become clean and sober?

VAUGHAN: The music, to me, has really become important. All along, there have been good reasons to play—I like it, a lot of other people like it and it's fun. But *beyond* that, it can help us out in all kinds of ways. Music is a way to reach out and hold on to each other in a healthy way. I'm finding that out now. It's helped me to open up, to take a chance on loving people instead of just isolating myself and suspecting everybody that I run into.

I realize that it's my responsibility to stay sober, and to reach out to anybody who's got a drinking problem. If I'm in a position to give any kind of help to them and don't, then what have I done? Hell, if it hadn't been for people reaching out to me, I may not have made it.

You know, there's a big lie in this business—that it's okay to go out in flames. But that really doesn't do anybody much good. I may be wrong, but I think Hendrix was trying to come around. I think he had gotten a glimpse of what he needed to change and that he really wanted to change. And I found myself in a similar position.

Some people can be examples about going ahead and growing. Some people, unfortunately, don't make it there and end up being examples because they had to die. I hit rock bottom, but thank God my bottom wasn't death. ●

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"Is there a point in being a rock and roll band after 20-odd years?"

KEITH RICHARDS

BY GENE SANTORO

PHOTOGRAPHY BY BARON WOLMAN

GUITAR WORLD: You've become a guitar hero without taking 14-minute solos.

KEITH RICHARDS: If I am a guitar hero, I never really entered the competition—I forgot to fill in the application form. [*laughs*] I've never thought of myself as being in that league, that particular game—you know, the fastest-gun-in-the-West sort of thing. With players like that, their audiences expect it and draw them into it. I've always seen what I do as oiling the machinery for the Stones, acting as a catalyst, or bashing out something and finding a catalyst in something one of the other guys in the band is doing. It depends on the day, the song, the mood: I might play something that I think is *crap* for 10 minutes, and suddenly Charlie [*Watts*] or Ronnie [*Wood*] will kick in with something that'll turn right around and give me a whole new vision. And so the song is born. [*laughs*] But as far as the guitar hero thing, if there's anything like that sticking to me it's just because I've been around so goddamn long. [*laughs*]

GW: MARCH 1986

GW: And yet the minute you hear the first bar from "Satisfaction" or "Start Me Up" or 50 other Stones songs, you instantly know who it is.

RICHARDS: Well, I guess that's true. You can either look upon that as highly individualistic or as, "Goddamn it, he can only play three things." [*laughs*] *I'm* still not sure what it is, but it doesn't seem to make much difference what guitar I pick up. Whether it's a Gretsch Country Gentleman or a Japanese copy of a Stratocaster or a '53 Telecaster, give me five minutes and I'll make 'em all sound the same. [*laughs*]

GW: That in itself is an art.

RICHARDS: It's because I really *demand* the same sound. Working with a small unit like the Stones for so long, you naturally find your own niche—you know what you've got to do and you go straight for *that* to drive the rest of the band. Everything I do really is connected with kicking off the band as a whole, to get the whole thing passed around the band until it comes back to me at a point where it turns *me* on again. Let the circle be unbroken. [*laughs*]

GW: And in the process of doing that you come up with those killer licks that define whole songs.

RICHARDS: Yeah, working from a lot of suspensions, especially with a high-strung guitar. I still use different tunings that I like to play around with, mostly open G. I tend to leave open D and E to Ronnie for slide. Since he joined, I don't tend to play as much slide as I used to because he's so good at it. Sometimes *we* can't even tell who did what. We'll listen to something, look at each other and say, "Which side are *you* on?" [*laughs*]

GW: What kinds of things do you do to practice or loosen up?

RICHARDS: I get the rest of them out of bed. [*laughs*] See, when you're the *Rolling Stones*, when you've been *that* big for *that* long, the immediate result is that you don't really work that much. You're either working your nuts off or you're doing absolutely nothing. It's a real start/stop affair. That's one of my—I don't want to say *excuses*—reasons for turning to dope in the Seventies, to calm myself down. It was the only way I could stop the adrenaline. You know, you stop a tour and *whack*, nothing for a year, then record for six months. I could never get the gears right on that part by myself—I guess I was using the dope as a kind of synchro-mesh [*laughs*], or else I was trying to get on automatic. [*laughs*] But that's all in the past.

The great thing about Ronnie and me is that we really don't stop working. We're pretty much around the corner from each other all the time, and he *loves* playing. So we've made a point in the last year or two—this is what I mean, we did our last tour *three years ago*—of going 'round to each other's place two or three nights a week and play. That way, we've kept the ideas flowing, so that there's much more *continuity* in the things we're doing. At least that's what I feel; we didn't just arrive cold turkey to start this record. The only difference was changing from acoustic to electric. It took me a couple of weeks to get used to the *power* of an electric guitar, especially full blast in the studio.

GW: You've been called the Stones' musical director…

RICHARDS: If I ever called *myself* that I'd be fired immediately. [*laughs*]

GW: But whenever anybody else in the band is asked who they follow, the answer is always you.

RICHARDS: Probably because the riffs start with me for the vast majority of the songs, so if it falls apart they can all look at me and say, "It's *your* fault." That's the thing about all the little subtle shifts in rhythm that we do. We've been playing together long enough now that we play games. I can throw in an extra half-bar here and there and everybody will *know*—even if I throw in a quarter-bar, Charlie will just flick it over. Those are the things you can't really learn, because it's just a matter of experience.

GW: Sounds like the way the Muddy Waters Band works.

RICHARDS: [*laughs*] That's funny, because that's the point the Stones are at right now, if they want to be. It's a real interesting position, 'cause we can make this damn thing *grow up*. We're the only ones around that've kept it together this long. Is there a point in being a rock and roll band after 20-odd years? Can you make it grow up gracefully? Can you get it to mature and make sense? [*pauses*] I guess what I'm saying is that I love doing it, and we're at a point now where we'd like to make it grow up with us. ●

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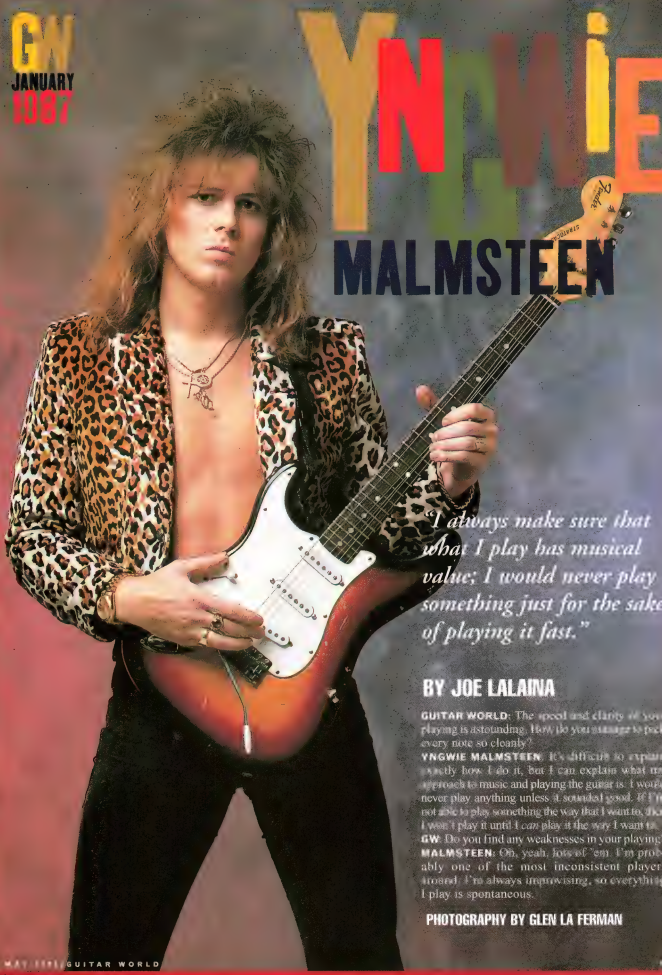
YNGWIE MALMSTEEN



"I always make sure that what I play has musical value; I would never play something just for the sake of playing it fast."

BY JOE LALAINA

GUITAR WORLD: The speed and clarity of your playing is astounding. How do you manage to pick every note so cleanly?

YNGWIE MALMSTEEN: It's difficult to explain exactly how I do it, but I can explain what my approach to music and playing the guitar is. I would never play anything unless it sounded good. If I'm not able to play something the way that I want to, then I won't play it until I *can* play it the way I want to.

GW: Do you find any weaknesses in your playing?

MALMSTEEN: Oh, yeah, lots of 'em. I'm probably one of the most inconsistent players around. I'm always improvising, so everything I play is spontaneous.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GLEN LA FERMAN

GW: Do you think you'd be a better player today if you had taken lessons as a beginner?

MALMSTEEN: I don't think anyone can actually teach you how to play guitar. Guitar is at a stage where you have to do your own innovations. It's not like classical violin, which has been around for hundreds of years. To play classical violin you need to be taught the specific skills needed to perform that particular kind of music. I'm better at creating something than actually learning something and using that. I'm too dumb to learn—I can only create. [*laughs*]

GW: Do you know exactly what you're playing at all times?

MALMSTEEN: Yes, I'm very aware of what I'm playing. It's very important to come to a point where you're totally knowledgeable of what it is you're playing—what relative scales and relative keys are and how to blend the parts so that they fit together nicely.

But once you start improvising, you shouldn't think about what it is you're playing anymore. I mean, when you're driving a car, you really don't think about it, right?

GW: It seems that many new guitarists are copping your licks.

MALMSTEEN: You're right, a lot of people are copying me. Some people tell me, "Oh, don't worry about it. You know you did it first." I mean, of course I know I did it first.

Certain things bother me and certain things don't. For instance, there's this guitarist who lives in Sweden. He used to buy rehearsal tapes from my band members and learn my licks note-for-note. He'd get the same exact gear I had, wear the same exact clothes that I was wearing, and even listened to the classical stuff I was listening to. He even went out with my old Swedish girlfriend after I broke up with her. The guy copied everything I did.

GW: Many people say that *you* copy a lot of things from Deep Purple's Ritchie Blackmore.

MALMSTEEN: That doesn't bother me at all; it's their opinion. It just immediately determines that they have no musical ear whatsoever. Anyone who says that I play like Ritchie Blackmore has to be musically retarded. I don't play like him. At one point, I was doing some of the things that Ritchie was doing because I thought they were really cool, but I did them my own way.

GW: It's been said that Blackmore is really fond of your playing.

MALMSTEEN: I was a bit nervous the first time I hung out with Ritchie because I heard a lot of weird stories about him. But when I met him he was really cool—he even let me play a couple of his guitars. He's one of the nicest guys I've ever met.

I've also heard that Edward Van Halen is one of the nicest dudes in the world. I was looking forward to meeting him and hopefully becoming good friends with him. Whenever I'm somewhere that he happens to be, I have someone relay a message, saying that I'm around and would love to meet him. But I still haven't met the guy—he seems to be hiding from me and suddenly disappears whenever he finds out that I happen to be around. It's a very sad and totally unnecessary situation.

The bottom line is that he's a great player and he's got *nothing* to worry about. The impression that I'm getting is that Van Halen's feeling threatened by me, but I may be extremely wrong.

GW: You've been accused of sacrificing emotion for technique.

MALMSTEEN: I consider myself a very emotional guitarist. It's a bad thing that a lot of people consider that anyone who plays fast doesn't play with feeling. I would never play something unless I felt it deep inside. I always make sure that what I play has musical value; I would never play something just for the sake of playing it fast.

GW: What would you like to be remembered for?

MALMSTEEN: I would like to be appreciated for my guitar playing, and for my effort to have influenced a new style of guitar playing. But I would also like to be remembered as someone who did it all himself—played guitar, wrote and arranged all the songs, produced the albums, wrote the lyrics—everything. I'd rather be remembered as a good composer and musician than as an influential guitarist. ●

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20 ESSENTIAL CLASSIC ROCK ALBUMS

1. PINK FLOYD

Dark Side Of The Moon (Capitol, 1973)
"Money—it's a gas," sang guitarist David Gilmour. Little did he realize just how prophetic that statement would turn out to be. To date, *Moon* has sold over 12 million copies in the U.S. alone. This is music that dared to go where no band had gone before...or since.

2. LED ZEPPELIN

Led Zeppelin IV (Atlantic, 1971)
There are at least three good reasons why this remains one of the greatest platters in rock history—and all of them are "Stairway To Heaven."

3. THE WHO

Who's Next (MCA, 1971)
First they were mod taste-makers. Then, with *Tommy*, they became hippie conceptualists *par excellence*. With *Who's Next*, The Who slammed hard into the Seventies and their most enduring incarnation as a bruising, brilliant hard rock band. Pete Townshend's monolithic mixture of power chording and synth squiggles on "Baba O' Riley" and "Won't Get Fooled Again" established the blueprint for arena rock. Teenage Wasteland's finest hour.

4. AEROSMITH

Toys In The Attic (Columbia, 1975)
The definitive hard rock album every teenager owned in 1975 because it was hot is the same album everyone listens to in 1993 because it's so cool. People will probably still be digging "Walk This Way" and "Sweet Emotion" in 2023.

5. EAGLES

Hotel California (Asylum, 1976)
This commentary on coked-out California ennui was super-charged by the arrival of former James Gang guitarist Joe Walsh. His extended ride on the title track is the one guitar solo that even *non-guitarists* can sing note-for-note.

6. THE BEATLES

Revolver (Capitol, 1966)
The Beatles' first full-on psychedelic album, this gem preceded *Sgt. Pepper's* by a year. Coming off the sepia-toned acoustic vibe of *Rubber Soul*, it featured George Harrison's fuzzed-up leads and transcendent sitar work, which set the heady pace for the late Sixties. John Lennon's many-layered "Tomorrow Never Knows" is still a first-class mind-fuck. The Beatles' best album? Quite possibly.

7. THE ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND

Eat A Peach (Capricorn, 1971)
Duane Allman's swan song features great FM songs ("Blue Sky," "Melissa"), bone-gnashing live blues ("One Way Out," "Trouble No More") and extended improvisatory jams ("Mountain Jam").

8. LYNYRD SKYNYRD

One More From The Road (MCA, 1976)
Sure, these legendary good ol' boys made better albums—*Second Helping* and *Street Survivors*, for instance. But this one's got the immortal live version of "Free Bird." We truly are not worthy.

9. BOSTON

Boston (Epic, 1976)
When Boston sang "More Than A Feeling," they weren't kidding. The "More" turned out to be Tom Scholz's massive wall of guitars and Brad Delp's layered vocals. Boston laughs at the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

10. QUEEN

A Night At The Opera (Hollywood, 1975)
If Boston laughs at the choir (see above), then Queen laughs at Boston. It is reported that there were so many overdubs on their epic hit, "Bohemian Rhapsody," that it was actually possible to see through the tape at certain points. The bigger the better, the tighter the sweater, the boys they all went nuts.

11. CREAM

Wheels Of Fire (RSO, 1968)
Is this Freedom Rock or Classic Rock? We weren't sure so we phoned Eddie Van Halen. Ed's reassuring reply: it doesn't matter, since "White Room" and "Crossroads" are both "fucking amazing." Good enuff for us.

12. VAN HALEN

1984 (Warner Brothers, 1984)
To qualify as a true Classic Rock band, you must have a Classic Rock single. "Jump" is VH's Rolls Royce.

13. HEART

Little Queen (Portrait, 1977)
You bought this album because it had two hot-looking girls on the cover. You thought Heart sounded like "Led Zeppelin

CLASSIC ROCK

with breasts." But you didn't realize that "Barracuda," the sawtoothed, perennial party favorite, was actually a comment on sexism.

14. KANSAS

Point Of Know Return (Kirshner, 1977)
Long before MTV's *Unplugged*, progressive rockers Kansas created a little ditty called "Dust In The Wind." And it was good.

15. JETHRO TULL

Aqualung (Chrysalis, 1971) Guitarist Martin Barre rattles off one incredible riff after another, which is why we still listen to this today.

16. THE STEVE MILLER BAND

Fly Like An Eagle (Capitol, 1976) Keeps on ticking, ticking, ticking into the future...

17. (Tie) YES / B.T.O.

Fragile (Atlantic, 1971)/*Not Fragile* (Mercury, 1974) Thin Limeys vs. Fat Canadians. "Roundabout" vs. "You Ain't Seen Nothin' Yet." Quasi-Brahms vs. a big, wet beer fart. Who could choose? Not us.

18. DEEP PURPLE

Machine Head (Warner Bros., 1972)
Ritchie Blackmore singlehandedly created the world's most titanic riff with "Smoke On The Water." And there *still* isn't a statue in Central Park to honor him.

19. SANTANA

Abraxas (Columbia, 1970) The title comes from a Herman Hesse novel—something about being horny and godlike at the same time. Just listen to the prickly lava flow of Carlos' guitar playing on "Black Magic Woman/ Gypsy Queen," and all will be revealed. Congas, timbales, lyrics in Spanish and English...And you thought "world beat" was an Eighties' invention.

20. BAD COMPANY

Bad Company (Swansong, 1974) All right, so it's true that, given enough time, a chimp could've written "Can't Get Enough." But so what? It sure sounds good sandwiched between any two songs we can think of.

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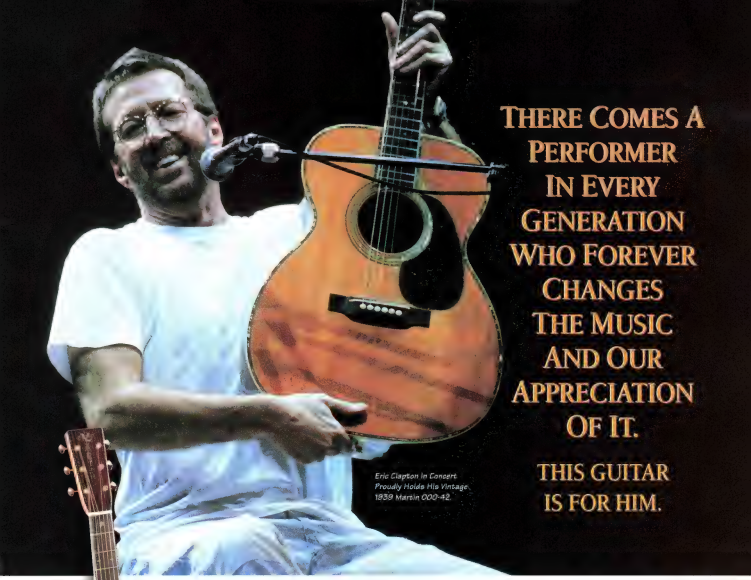
1. **THE BEATLES** *1962-1966* (Capitol, 1973)
2. **THE BEATLES** *1967-1970* (Capitol, 1973)
3. **ROLLING STONES** *Hot Rocks* 1964-1971 (ABKCO)
4. **JIMI HENDRIX** *Smash Hits* (Reprise)
5. **NEIL YOUNG** *Decade* (Reprise)
6. **ERIC CLAPTON** *Time Pieces: The Best Of Eric Clapton* (Polydor)
7. **THE DOORS** *Best Of The Doors* (Elektra)
8. **CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVIVAL** *Chronicles Vol. 1* (Fantasy)
9. **ZZ TOP** *Greatest Hits* (Warner Bros.)
10. **JOURNEY** *Greatest Hits* (Columbia)



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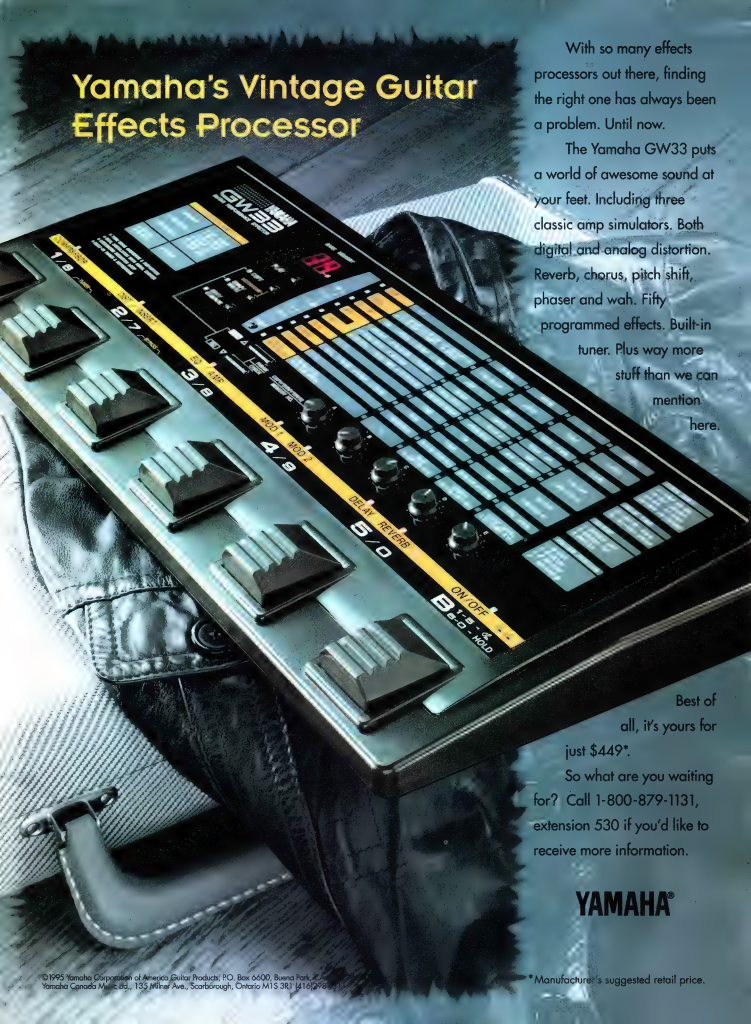

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"Most people hear him as a guitar player. They don't see all the different pants he owns."—Joe Satriani

VAI + SATCH

BY ALAN DI PERNA

PHOTOGRAPHY BY NEIL ZLOZOWER

GW APRIL 1990

GUITAR WORLD: Steve, we know that Joe was your first guitar teacher. How did that come about?

STEVE VAI: I had this friend who impressed me with his guitar playing. And he said, "Well, you should see my teacher; he can really play."

His teacher turned out to be Joe. I couldn't really afford lessons, so I chipped in with another friend and Joe taught us both at the same time.

GW: How long did that go on?

VAI: Maybe a year.

JOE SATRIANI: I'd say that would be pushing it. I seem to remember suggesting that the lessons be separated—that more could be accomplished if we did.

VAI: Yeah, you could get an extra five bucks! [*general laughter*]

GW: How old were you?

VAI: I was 13 or 14 and Joe was a couple of years older.

GW: Were you the rebellious type in school, Joe?

SATRIANI: Yeah, I guess so. But maybe in more of a solitary way. I walked out on quite a few classes.

VAI: You know, this brings up one of my fondest memories of Joe, and one of the biggest inspirations I ever received from him. It had nothing to do with music. I had just gotten into high school, and one day I just left one of my classes to go to the bathroom. The halls were really quiet. And out of a classroom I hear a teacher yelling, "Come back here, you!" Now, you gotta understand, Joe had the longest hair in the world back then. He was this weird guy with big eyes, big hair. All of a sudden, I see him walkin' out of this room going like this [*gesture of contemptuous dismissal*] towards some teacher. Like "get *out* of here." And he just walked away down the hall. And it was one of the biggest inspirations. It was exactly the way he's always been. No compromise.

GW: Did you guys hang out back then, or was the age difference a barrier?

SATRIANI: We hung out a little bit. I think I brought Steve out to this spot I called The Sea Of Emotion a few times. It was a field, part of an old farm where they'd built three schools. The field sort of dipped down, almost as if it was a dry lake bed. It was a place where you'd go to think—to pour out what was in your mind and in your heart.

VAI: Yeah, we used to go there in your Volkswagen. We were driving around and we just sat there a while. At the time, I was so in awe of Joe because he was the teacher. I used to just sit and listen.

When I played the Nassau Coliseum [*a Long Island concert venue*] recently, I got on my bicycle—I always take a bicycle on tour with me—and rode all the way from the Coliseum to the school. And I actually went to my first kindergarten classroom, which was still there.

GW: Were either of you writing tunes back then?

SATRIANI: Oh, yeah. As soon as I learned three chords, I wrote a song with three chords in it. But when the lessons really kicked in with Bill Wescott, our music teacher at school—who was a big influence on both of us—I learned to write away from any instrument. That was a heavy concept at the time. And also to take out some manuscript paper and write without really knowing what I was doing, and put off reading it till the following day. Just to get into the frame of mind that you could write music that had nothing to do with your physical abilities on whatever instrument you were struggling with at the moment. And he said to me, "It might turn out that you're not a very good guitar player. You might not be as great as Hendrix or whoever. But it doesn't mean that you can't write good music and be a musician." Of course, I probably said something totally rude to him. But I probably went walking down the hall thinking he was right, and that has helped me out quite a bit. Because I have come up against a lot of physical barriers that are stuck in Joe's body. So thank God for those lessons where it was really pure music. It was intellect and heart bypassing the tendons and muscles.

GW: Have you guys ever thought about recording together?

VAI: I've always thought about doing a record with Joe. Right now, our careers just won't allow it because we're so busy. But one of these days, when everything dies down, we'll sit down and do it.

It's going to be great. 'Cause my fondest memories of jamming are with Joe when I was taking lessons. We would just sit there and jam for hours. You'd just use your ears and your imagination; there were no record companies or anything like that involved.

SATRIANI: It was purely expression.

VAI: Those were some of the most exciting musical experiences of my life, and I want to recapture that.

SATRIANI: It would be nice to try to recapture it. But those experiences exist *because* there wasn't any reason. It was just an inner need to share the expression.

GW: A final question. What is it that each of you admires most about the other's playing? Or what's the one thing the other guy does that you just couldn't do in a million years?

SATRIANI: I've said this before: I see myself as a sort of hack, in a way. I'm a quirky kind of player. But I always thought, even when I first started teaching Steve, that he possessed a couple of extra muscles in his hand. [*laughs*] Some more tendons maybe. Or maybe they're connected to his brain better. But, certainly, I hear total command when he's playing. Did you ever listen to a player and worry that he's not going to get through it? It becomes a distraction from the music. The opposite of that happens when Steve's playing. It just sounds like he's got it. Everything is just what you would imagine someone could ever possibly do.

VAI: Fooled you guys!

SATRIANI: No. So, if I had to squeeze it down into a few words, I'd just say it's the power and the impact of his playing. I've heard more of him than other people have heard. Steve Vai is a huge musician. Most people hear him as a guitar player. They don't see all the different pairs of pants he owns. But I've seen the pants and I've heard the tapes.

VAI: Well, thank you very much, Joe. I don't know what to say. I'll lend you my pants. I'll tell you where I bought them. That's probably the nicest thing anybody's ever said. Are you done? You can keep going if you like. Don't let me interrupt.

SATRIANI: The only other thing I'd have to say is that there's definitely something that drew us together that has kept us together, even though there have been times in our careers where we didn't see each other for years. I don't know what it is, but when he plays I receive another message outside of the great guitar playing that a lot of people hear. There's an inner message that I relate to and which draws me into his playing, and that goes beyond just guitar.

VAI: I said this long before Joe was popular, and I'll say it again. As long as he's making music, I'll always find an inspiration to play. I see what he does as pure integrity in music. Integrity with his own intuition. It's always been there. In the way he'd deliver himself verbally. In the way that he would walk out of a classroom and not care if he was going to get suspended. That all shows in his playing. For me, it isn't a matter of saying, "Wow, Joe Satriani, he could do the vibrato that I couldn't do." Or, "He could hit a harmonic anytime he wanted." It wasn't that. It was, and is, a package. It's all part of a larger unit. Joe perceives a certain musicality in me. But I feel that what I do is dwarfed by the musicality I feel coming from him. He's always been the musician, not just the guitar player.

SATRIANI: I'm all choked up, Steve. ●

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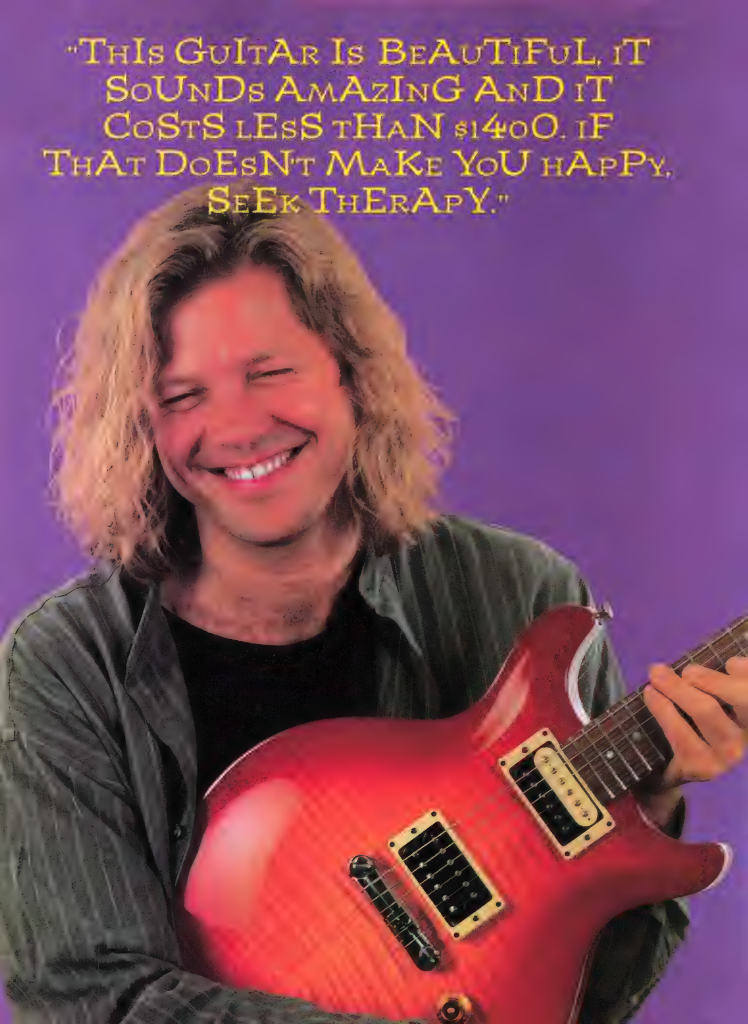
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FLEA

BY ALAN DI PERNA

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARKUS CUFF

GW NOVEMBER 1991

GUITAR WORLD: How'd a white kid growing up in middle-class Hollywood get so damn funky?

FLEA: I was raised on black music. The first music I was really into was Louis Armstrong. That's about as black as you can get. And I've always loved funk music: Parliament/Funkadelic, Ohio Players, Brothers Johnson, James Brown.

GW: Were your tastes considered unusual in your high school?

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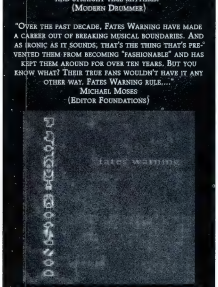

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FLEA: Musically, everything was unusual for me at the high school I went to. The black kids were into Parliament/Funkadelic and the white kids were into Led Zeppelin and Kiss. And I wasn't really into either. I was raised on hard-core bebop. My stepdad's a jazz musician, and I was really into that. Not that I had the technical ability or knowledge of music theory to play that shit. But that's what I wanted to do. I played classical music, too—I played in the L.A. Junior Philharmonic. I didn't get into rock music at all until I met Hillel [*Slovak, the Chili Peppers' first guitarist*], who had this rock band in high school with Jack Irons [*the Chili Peppers' first drummer, now with Pearl Jam*] called Anthem. When we became friends, they said, "Why don't you figure out how to play the bass? We'll boot out the bass player we've got and you can play with us."

Hillel got me listening to Led Zeppelin, Hendrix, Rush, Bill Bruford, Allan Holdsworth, the Dixie Dregs, Black Sabbath—all kinds of stuff. That's when I got into rock music. Once that happened, I started getting hip to the punk rock thing. One night I took a hit of acid and went to see this band called Fear. I just said, "Holy shit! Rock music: this is what it's about!" And a week later I saw an ad in the paper: "Fear is looking for a new bass player." And I was there. I got that gig. And that kind of changed things around for me.

GW: Coming, as you did, from a jazz and classical background, did rock music seem simplistic to you at first?

FLEA: No. Because it was a whole other world. I was amazed because the background I came from was all reading music. But here were my friends, just hanging out and jamming on Hendrix tunes and blues. It just seemed so much wilder. It was more in tune with people my age and what they were into. It was a challenge for me to get into that. So it didn't seem simplistic, no.

GW: What is the essence of the funk?

FLEA: The essence of the funk is being loyal to the funk. Living by it, feeling it 24 hours a day. It's the true universal language. I just love it; always have. I believe in it. I believe that it can save people. I love so many kinds of music, but the funk is something else. I hear funk in everything.

GW: Even in Mozart?

FLEA: Yeah. I hear it everywhere. ●

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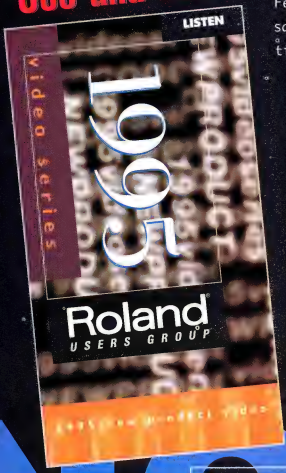

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KURT COBAIN

"I guess I'm calling Leo Fender, the dead guy, a dork. Now I'll never get an endorsement."

BY JEFF GILBERT

GUITAR WORLD: Why have you suddenly become so popular?

KURT COBAIN: We play so hard that we can't tune our guitars fast enough. People can relate to that. Plus, we sound like the Bay City Rollers after an assault by Black Sabbath. And we vomit onstage better than *anyone.*

GW: MTV thinks Nirvana is a metal band.

COBAIN: That's fine; let them be fooled! I don't have anything against *Headbanger's Ball*, but it's strange to see our faces on MTV.

GW FEBRUARY 1992

ILLUSTRATION BY JAY LINCOLN

GW: Metallica's Kirk Hammett is a huge Nirvana fan.

COBAIN: That's real flattering. We met him recently and he's a real nice guy. We talked about the Sub Pop scene, heavy metal and guitars.

GW: Speaking of guitars, you seem to favor low-end models.

COBAIN: I don't favor them—I can afford them. [*laughs*] I'm left-handed, and it's not very easy to find reasonably priced, high-quality left-handed guitars. But out of all the guitars in the whole world, the Fender Mustang is my favorite. I've only owned two of them.

GW: What is it about them that works for you?

COBAIN: They're cheap and totally inefficient, and they sound like crap and are very small. They also don't stay in tune, and when you want to raise the string action on the fretboard, you have to loosen all the strings and completely remove the bridge. You have to turn these little screws with your fingers and hope that you've estimated it right. If you screw up, you have to repeat the process over and over until you get it right. Whoever invented that guitar was a dork.

GW: It was Leo Fender.

COBAIN: I guess I'm calling Leo Fender, the dead guy, a dork. Now I'll never get an endorsement. [*laughs*] We've been offered a Gibson endorsement, but I can't find a Gibson I like.

GW: Is the Mustang your only guitar?

COBAIN: No, I own a '66 Jaguar. That's the guitar I polish and baby—I refuse to let anyone touch it when I jump into the crowd. [*laughs*] Lately, I've been using a Strat live because I don't want to ruin my Mustang yet. I like to use Japanese Strats because they're a bit cheaper and the frets are smaller than the American version's.

GW: The acoustic guitar you play on *Nevermind*'s "Polly" sounds flat.

COBAIN: That's a $20 junk-shop Stella—I didn't bother changing the strings. [*laughs*] It barely stays in tune. In fact I have to use duct tape to hold the tuning keys in place.

GW: Considering how violently you play the guitar, I have to assume that you use pretty heavy-duty strings.

COBAIN: Yeah. And I keep blowing up amplifiers, so I use whatever I can find at junk shops—junk is always best.

GW: Ever get the urge to use a twang bar?

COBAIN: No. Anybody who plays guitar knows that only Jimi Hendrix was able to use the standard tremolo and still keep it in tune. Those things are totally worthless. I do have one on a Japanese Strat, but I don't use it.

GW: Your first album, *Bleach*, was recorded for $600; how much did *Nevermind* run you?

COBAIN: [*laughs*] I don't remember—I've got Alzheimer's. Please, don't ask us how much our [*"Smells Like Teen Spirit"*] video cost; that's a hell of an embarrassment. We definitively could have used some film student, who would've done just as good of a job. ●

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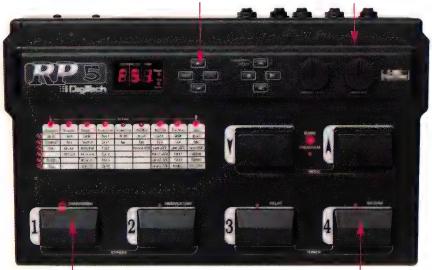

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10 ESSENTIAL HARDCORE ALBUMS

By David Grad

Many of hardcore's finest discharges of sonic mayhem are unobtainable; sadly, they are long out of print and waiting for reissue by some discerning record company. The list that follows is geared to provide the interested beginner with the tip of the iceberg: easily accessible recordings which will provide an overview of hardcore's historical development and its regional variations.

1. VARIOUS ARTISTS

Faster & Louder: Hardcore Punk, Vol #1 (Rhino)
This is about the best introduction to early hardcore that you can get. All the usual suspects are represented, with contributions by the likes of The Dead Kennedys, The Circle Jerks and Suicidal Tendencies. The inclusion of The Bad Brain's long out-of-print "Pay To Cum" single makes this collection essential.

2. BLACK FLAG

Damaged (SST)
The motherload. Critics love to use words like "aggressive" and "deranged," but *Damaged* actually lives up to whatever expectations these adjectives might arouse. If you are not instantly affected by the experience of Greg Ginn's guitar and Henry Rollins' vocals soaring their way through the sick, soft underbelly of the American dream, consult a physician—a specialist.

3. POISON IDEA

Feel The Darkness (American Leather)
This obese Portland quartet bring a savagely dark sensibility to hardcore. The album deals with the high cost of low living and should serve as an antidote to even the most lethal dose of straight edge. The title cut will have you checking to see that the front door is locked.

4. MINOR THREAT

Complete Discography (Dischord)
Asked how a band with a total output of only 26 songs could be so influential, guitarist Lyle Preslar responded: "Because in those songs there is no such thing as filler. Each was written because it was what we wanted to write. There was no issue of making money or getting signed, so we weren't ever compromising anything for anyone else's sake."

5. SSD

Power (Taang!)
This is a good, comprehensive compilation of SS Decontrol's work (they shortened their name in mid-career). It features tracks from all their albums, including their final unfortunate descent into metal, as well as some live and previously unreleased material. It will convince you that it was the hardcore kids of New England who really understood what a Marshall was made for. Essential for its inclusion of the dirge-like "How Much Art (Can You Take?)"

6. NEGATIVE APPROACH

Total Recall (Touch and Go)
This CD features the powerful Detroit unit's complete released works, and throws in 17 more live cuts recorded at various points of their career. Asked to name the inspiration behind Negative Approach, John Brannon, who now employs his napalm-scorched vocal technique in The Laughing Hyenas, said, "Just hating a lot of things."

7. BAD BRAINS

Bad Brains (ROIR)
Recorded at the legendary studio 171A, this collection is a testament to the fact that all you need to make a great record is a four-track in an abandoned building. Despite its inclusion of an inferior version of "Pay To Cum," and the fact that the reggae which is a staple of their repertoire is better handled by others, the Bad Brains still make seamless hardcore.

8. BAD RELIGION

No Control (Epitaph)
Lyrical sophistication and peerless vocals sustained this band over the years; both come together on this near-perfect effort.

9. VARIOUS ARTISTS

Sunday Matinee: New York Hardcore (Another Planet)
Compiled by Jimmy Gestapo, this collection of 17 tunes by as many New York bands demonstrates why CBGB's was a place for the weak-hearted to avoid on Sunday afternoons from 1986-90.

10. AGNOSTIC FRONT

Last Warning (Relativity)
This CD documents both the beginning and the end of New York hardcore, including both the 1983 EP *United Blood* and five tracks from A.F.'s 1992 farewell show. It is remarkable how in-your-face the band remained after 10 years, but the standout is the EP, which demonstrates why New York hardcore had such a scary reputation.

ADDRESSES: *Rhino Records, 10635 Santa Monica Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90025-4900; SST: PO Box 1, Lawndale, CA 90260; Dischord, 3819 Beecher St., N.W., Washington D.C. 20007; Taang! PO Box 51, Auburndale, MA 02166; Touch And Go: PO Box 25539, Chicago, IL 60625; ROIR, 611 Broadway, Suite 411, New York, NY 10012; Epitaph, 6310 Sunset Blvd., Suite 111, Hollywood, CA 90028; Another Planet c/o Profile, 740 Broadway, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10003; Relativity, 20525 Manhattan Pl., Torrance, CA 90501*

ZZ TOP

"We like to think of ourselves as the Salvador Dalis of the Delta."—Billy Gibbons

BY HAROLD STEINBLATT & BRAD TOLINSKI

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANN SUMMA

GUITAR WORLD: What attracted you to the blues?

BILLY GIBBONS: The backbeat. The two and the four made my head snap. Plus, it was cool because my parents hated it. [*laughs*]

DUSTY HILL: Actually, my mother turned me on to the blues. My family listened to Lightnin' Hopkins as well as Elvis Presley. I thought everybody did! I'd go over to friends' houses and ask them to put on some Howlin' Wolf, and they wouldn't know what I was talking about. Then, when they would come over to my house, I'd play them some blues, and their parents wouldn't let them come back. [*laughs*] The blues was still called "race records" back then. I mean, how cold is that?

GW: In what way did the blues stimulate your imagination?

HILL: When I was younger, I'd listen to a song and take it literally. I'd think, "Boy, what a drag. How horrible, he must be really bummin'." If it was about sex I'd think, "Boy, I wish I was that guy!"

GW: Because your appearances are so unusual and your videos so clever, it's very easy to believe that ZZ Top lives the lyrics to its songs. In that way, the band comes close to capturing the essence of those legendary country bluesmen.

GIBBONS: You're right. Cotton is no longer picked by hand, so the problem is: how do you go about writing fresh blues? The blues deals with the highest of highs, the lowest of lows, and all points in between. So we had to create surrealistic entities that could handle those extreme mood swings. It seemed that this was the only legitimate way to approach it. We like to think of ourselves as the Salvador Dalis of the Delta.

GW: The ZZ Top phenomenon is a wonderful vehicle for fantasy. Do the fans ever confuse your real selves with your video and vinyl personae?

HILL: Oh, yeah—especially when I'm at home. For example, I'll go into a convenience store and invariably the guy behind the counter will say, "What are you doing here?"—like he doesn't believe that I eat, or something! Then once that's out of the way, he'll start looking out the window to see if the car and three girls are out there. I usually end up telling him that the girls are repairing the car back at the house, so he won't be too bummed.

GW: Billy, you've mentioned that Bo Diddley was one of your big influences. Like you, he is known for his odd-shaped guitars, great rhythm chops and unusual stage clothing.

GIBBONS: He was the perfect bridge between Delta blues and rockers like Chuck Berry. Bo's tone—which was produced by a custom Gretsch guitar with two DeArmond single-coil pickups set in the middle toggle position and a Magnatone amp—was dramatically different. He didn't sound like anyone else.

His sound, combined with his array of bizarre, rectangular guitars, made him a real hero. The fact that a major manufacturer built him a special guitar also intrigued me. I thought, "Who is this guy? How did he get Gretsch to make him a guitar?" He's still one of the most fascinating figures in American rock and roll.

GW: Who else influenced your sound?

GIBBONS: Dusty and I recently compared notes on that subject and came up with the obvious—B. B. King, Muddy Waters, Jimmy Reed, Howlin' Wolf, John Lee Hooker and Albert Collins. But some of the more obscure influences include Terry Simpson, who played with a Texas outfit called the Raiders. They had several instrumental hits in the Sixties, including "Stick Shift," "Motivation" and "Raising Cain." The Nightcaps, out of Dallas, were also big influences.

GW MARCH 1991

HILL: Every once in a while, during a live show, Billy will throw in a Nightcaps lick in the middle of a song and we'll just look at each other and wink. I love it when he does that, 'cause it usually doesn't belong there.

My major influences were primarily guitar players and bands—I started playing bass by accident. My older brother played guitar and sang. We found a drummer and soon realized we needed to complete the rhythm section, so they elected me to be the bassist. Straight away we were playing in clubs and jamming with everybody in town, so I really learned to play while on stage.

After playing for two years, I landed a gig with Freddy King! I was amazed that they even let me on the same stage, because I really wasn't very good—though I came pretty cheap. [*laughs*] I was only 16 at the time and was petrified.

Back then, the clubs were still segregated. One night we played the Ascot Ballroom, which was a black club. I didn't have a driver's license at the time, so somebody dropped me off. I rolled my stuff up to the door, and the doorman, who was a pretty big fella, said threateningly, "What do you want?" I said, "I'm with the band." He looked me over and said, "I don't think so." Just as all these people started gathering around, Freddy pushed his way through the crowd and said quietly, "C'mon." After one song, everything was all right.

GW: What gear did you use when you were playing with Freddy King?

HILL: I was playing an old hollow-body Harmony through whatever I could borrow. I finally stepped up to an Ampeg, which I loved because it had *wheels*!

GIBBONS: Love that outboard gear. [*laughs*]

GW: Was Freddy your main influence?

HILL: I learned how to play primarily from Freddy, my brother and Billy. Interestingly, all three share the same philosophy: "Less is best." And, "*Solid* less is *the* best." If you have a solid foundation, then you can play.

GW: Why is Dallas such a holy place for guitar?

GIBBONS: Culturally, up until the mid-Fifties there wasn't much to do—except play. ●

SPINAL TAP

"Let those boys like Beck and Clapton fight it out with each other. Let me watch and laugh."—Nigel Tufnel

BY TEISCO DEL REY

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANN SUMMA

GUITAR WORLD: Where's Ian Faith, your manager?

ALL: Dead.

GUITAR WORLD: How did he die?

DAVID ST. HUBBINS: Who cares?

NIGEL TUFNEL: You get news like that and you go, "I'm not even going to ask how."

ST. HUBBINS: He was always prone to apoplexy, because he had very thin English skin and very thick alcoholic blood.

TUFNEL: He was prone to apoplexy and—what do they call it?—embezzlement.

GW: What happened to your last drummer, Joe "Mama" Besser?

ST. HUBBINS: We assume he's dead.

DEREK SMALLS: He was not a well man. He had a jazz background.

ST. HUBBINS: We assume he either returned to the world of jazz or died.

TUFNEL: Which is really a toss-up.

GW: What about Viv Savage, the keyboard player?

ST. HUBBINS: He's dead. Sadly, he passed away.

SMALLS: Ironically, we found out later that Viv had originally been a drummer.

TUFNEL: He gave it up as a teenager to play keyboards, as best he could.

SMALLS: If we'd known that, we'd never have hired him.

GW: What did you think of *This Is Spinal Tap* when you saw the finished product?

TUFNEL: We were betrayed, basically.

SMALLS: [T.I.S.T. *director*] Marty DiBergi? Try the butcher's union.

ST. HUBBINS: Because we really came off—I don't know if you picked up on this—as sort of second-rate.

TUFNEL: [*To David*] You put it best: Somebody who'd seen that movie would never dream that we were a smooth act.

SMALLS: [*nodding*] The pod sequence.

TUFNEL: Exactly. Every night, that pod opens and Derek gets out. The night they're filming, there's a jam-up. So people who see it go, "They're stupid."

ST. HUBBINS: Now, if we'd turned the cameras on Martin DiBergi, and caught him slipping out of a hotel room with some 14-year-old girl—I'm not saying this happened—but if the camera had caught him doing that, if it had been in our hands, we would have at least had the decency to come to him and say, "Look, we've got this on film..."

TUFNEL: "How much money..."

ST. HUBBINS: Exactly. "What will it take for us to take it out?" We would have made those choices on firm moral grounds.

GW: Yet, for all that the film doesn't always show you in a good light, you're more popular now than ever.

ST. HUBBINS: Well, they miss us, you know. Absence makes the heart grow fonder.

SMALLS: See, it's the flipside of what happened when we were active: we tended to become less popular. A karmic turn of the wheel there.

GW: More than any group, Spinal Tap has either followed, anticipated or paralleled almost the entire history of British rock, from skiffle to heavy metal.

TUFNEL: Sort of a living time line.

ST. HUBBINS: Of course, there are a few missing chapters in there. We recorded—but did not release—a dance album during the disco era. We never went punk; we never went new wave. We experimented with r&b, but only as filler for our live act.

SMALLS: Britain is very fashion-oriented. A lot of its musical styles are like pieces of clothing you put on and take off. You know: "This looks good...No it doesn't."

GW APRIL 1992

ST. HUBBINS: We've never been like that. We're sort of like Gibraltar; we're always there, obscuring most of the view.

GW: The Beatles were just a little older than you. Did you ever meet them?

ST. HUBBINS: I never met any of the Beatles. I enjoyed their music but, with a few exceptions, it wasn't really what you'd call gritty, hard music.

TUFNEL: It wasn't dirty. It was musicians who washed their hands.

SMALLS: No jiz. Jizless music.

TUFNEL: It's okay to have music like "Here Comes The Sun" if you're shopping in the market, buying meat or poultry. [*Sings very high*] "Here comes the sun, here comes the sun. There it goes, here it comes."

ST. HUBBINS: We're not trying to be unkind.

TUFNEL: No, that's just the way it is. They know it.

GW: Nigel, there's a rumor which has circulated for years that you were up for the lead guitar seat in the Yardbirds on three different occasions.

TUFNEL: That's one of those rumors that you hear. I think it's just based on jealousy, really. I was never contacted by any of those people, ever.

ST. HUBBINS: But didn't Keith Relf call you when he was forming Renaissance?

TUFNEL: That's different. First of all, I don't like auditions. Let those boys like Beck and Clapton fight it out with each other. Let me watch and laugh.

ST. HUBBINS: I would also like to say—because he's too modest to say it himself—that Nigel belongs in that company because he is one of the premier lead guitarists and stylists. No one plays quite like him. No one even tries.

TUFNEL: When you get older you realize that what's important is not the amount of notes that you play. It's if you're thinking about them after you've played them.

ST. HUBBINS: A mental resonance.

TUFNEL: Exactly. A mental depository. Can you remember what you played? If you can't, why did you play it? It becomes a thinking man's game. ●

"We want to rain pure hell on people."

DiMEBAG DARRELL

BY GLENN THRUSH

GUITAR WORLD: Your father ran a studio where he recorded a lot of blues and country. Did being around those players have an impact on you?

DIAMOND DARRELL: Yeah. I'm from *Texas*, dude. There are so many people who, overnight, claim they play bluesy, but I grew up down here watchin' dudes play with my dad. I used to come home from school and watch all these incredible players goin' through their chops—Jimmy Wallace, Bugs Henderson, Ricky Lynn. They're not known very much outside of Dallas, but they're all incredible—and seeing them play had a hell of an influence on me. And, of course, there's the Reverend G—Billy Gibbons—we've seen him more than once at clubs and stuff.

GW: Do you play blues much?

DARRELL: Man, I ain't sayin' that I'm some amazing blues player or nothing, but the things I do are just naturally bluesy. It's hard to describe—it's something that Texans just seem to have.

GW: You guys are known for really ripping it up on the road.

DARRELL: When we write songs, we imagine ourselves in the crowd, watching this band come out and blow troughs of shit on everybody's skulls. We want to rain pure hell on people and we don't want to push anybody away. We've got a simple rule: "Our stage is your stage."

GW: All well and good, but what's it like playing with 20 or 30 people moshing and stage-diving in your face?

DARRELL: It keeps you on your toes. I've had the headstock of my guitar broken six or seven times. All these idiots come skanking around, people are bear-huggin' me, getting their bodies all over my strings, and all you hear is rubbing and feedback, like a porno movie. But it's the ones that don't pay attention that you got to watch out for. One night I was playing a lead on "Psycho Holiday," and I caught an elbow right on the headstock. I had my head down, trying to play one of those stretch licks. I didn't want to look up, but then I saw the headstock flapping, with the strings still hooked up to it. Luckily, it broke behind the Floyd Rose nut so it held. I must say I was tuned a little flat until the end of the song. [*laughs*] But the next day my teeth glued and C-clamped it, and I said, "She's back."

Yeah, it gets out of control sometimes. Not too long ago, I got totally knocked unconscious at a gig! This dude comes right out of the pit with his head down as I'm really banging my head down, so I don't see him. Boom! He hits my head like a Mack truck and I get knocked cold. That was the first time I got knocked out in my life, dude. It's only the second song of the set, and I'm laying flat on the stage. [*laughs*] After a few seconds I come to and realize that my guitar's all feedin' back. I look up and Phil [*Anselmo, vocalist*] and the guys are laughin' at me. I finished the song, but I had a headache from hell that whole set. Brutal, brutal show.

GW: Where were the bouncers when that happened?

DARRELL: In hell, hopefully. We hate security; we play without 'em if we can. Those bitches act like they're the good guys and that the kids are the bad guys. The bouncers are all steroided up, and they start pickin' up these kids and trashing them out. We'll stop a song, man. It's not cool that some kid gets his ass kicked at our show, that ain't what we're about as a band. We'll stay close to our crowd no matter what, man. Everybody here's just regular.

GW: So do *you* ever stage dive?

DARRELL: I did until a couple of years ago, when I hit the boards and got a softball-sized knot on my skull. It was about then that I realized, "Hey, I'll be the guy who stands on stage and provokes this stuff."

GW: Any final words?

DARRELL: Yeah. People have been calling me *Diamond* Darrell for too long. It's a mistake. I've always been called *Dimebag* Darrell by my friends. That's my real name. Dimebag Darrell—got it? ●

GW APRIL 1992

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LES CLAYPOOL + GEDDY LEE

"My goal was to come up with a sound that was broader than just a thumping low end. I liked aggressive, obnoxious sounds."
–Geddy Lee

BY ALAN DI PERNA

GUITAR WORLD: What was the first Rush concert you ever attended, Les?

LES CLAYPOOL: The *Hemispheres* tour [*1978*]. I was about 14. I drank three beers and threw up.

GEDDY LEE: The finest way to enjoy a Rush concert! So *you* were the guy.

CLAYPOOL: It was amazing. It really got me practicing.

GW: Rush and Primus are bands where the bass player plays a very central role.

LEE: Yeah. In Les' band it has kind of a dominant role. [*laughter*] More so than in Rush.

GW: Did you develop your respective bass styles out of a need to fill up space in a trio?

LEE: I think it was the drugs...

CLAYPOOL: I've always liked three-piece bands. A huge part of the reason for that is because I was the

GW JUNE 1992

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW McNAUGHTON

biggest Rush fan. My whole high school career was just Rush—I had Rush T-shirts, I went to every show, had every record. So I've always liked trios, and I've always been a pretty aggressive player. I've been in bigger bands, but I tend to write chordy stuff for the bass that fills up a lot of space. I'd step on a lot of toes if Primus was a bigger band.

LEE: I think that when Rush started, the lack of a rhythm guitar put pressure on me to fill in. My goal was to come up with a sound that was broader than just a thumping low end. All the bass players I liked had aggressive, obnoxious sounds. Bands with real bottomy, soft-sounding bass players always reminded me of lounge acts. I was into people like Jack Bruce and John Entwistle, both of whom were basically in trios.

GW: Both of you are bass guitar role models.

LEE: How does it feel to be a role model, Les?

CLAYPOOL: Weird. I don't feel that way. There are some incredible bass players coming out of the woodwork—guys like Flea—who are really putting the bass at the forefront. When I started playing, nobody wanted to play bass—everybody wanted to be Van Halen or Jimmy Page. But now a lot of kids want to play bass.

LEE: That's how I got my first gig as a bass player. I was playing guitar in a band, the bass player quit, and nobody wanted take his place.

CLAYPOOL: I think it keeps the sperm count higher, too. Those low frequencies.

GW: What was the first song you learned to play, Geddy?

LEE: The Yardbirds' "For Your Love," on acoustic guitar. Classic. And the opening part of that Roy Orbison song. [*Sings the riff to "Oh, Pretty Woman."*] If you could figure that out, you were cool. I can't remember the first song I learned on bass, although I do remember that there was this old Rolling Stones song—I think it was called "2120 South Michigan Ave." [*from* 12x5, *ABKCO, 1964*]. If you were a bass player way back then and could play that song, you were all right. It was one of those watersheds.

CLAYPOOL: I think the watershed for me was the main line from [*Yes*'] "Roundabout."

GW: Geddy, under what conditions did you make your first recording?

LEE: Like most first albums, it wasn't recorded under very advantageous conditions. We were playing bars, and we'd go in after a gig and record all night. It's a horrible way to make a record.

CLAYPOOL: How did the first record do? Did it bust open doors for you?

LEE: It was a real slow build. We were rejected by everyone. They kept talking to us about doing singles deals but we wanted to make an album. So the record came out in Canada on our own label. We had a local following in Toronto, and all our fans bought it. They'd also call the radio station and request it incessantly. The program director loved it and started playing it on the air. And as soon as they played it, they got all these phone-ins—and it all started from there.

CLAYPOOL: Was "Working Man" the big single?

LEE: Yeah. It got us a gig in Cleveland. We opened up for ZZ Top purely on the strength of our import being played on that radio station. There was no American release at that point. We were completely freaked about doing the show—the crowd recognized the songs and we couldn't believe it! Even though Cleveland's not very far from Toronto, it might as well have been 2,000 miles away, for what it represented to us: a gig in the States.

GW: How did you guys get your deal, Les?

CLAYPOOL: Basically, it took a lot of blow jobs on our part. Actually, what we did was very similar to what Geddy described. We talked to labels, but they all wanted to "develop" us. We had kind of a cult following and a demo called "Sausage" that was doing really well. Basically, [*guitarist*] Larry [*Lalonde*] and Herb [*a.k.a. Tim Alexander, Primus' drummer*] had just joined the band, and I decided we needed to put out some vinyl, so we recorded a live album [Suck On This, *Caroline, 1990*]. I think it's our best-sounding record.

LEE: You gotta do it yourself if you don't want to do what everybody else is doing. ●

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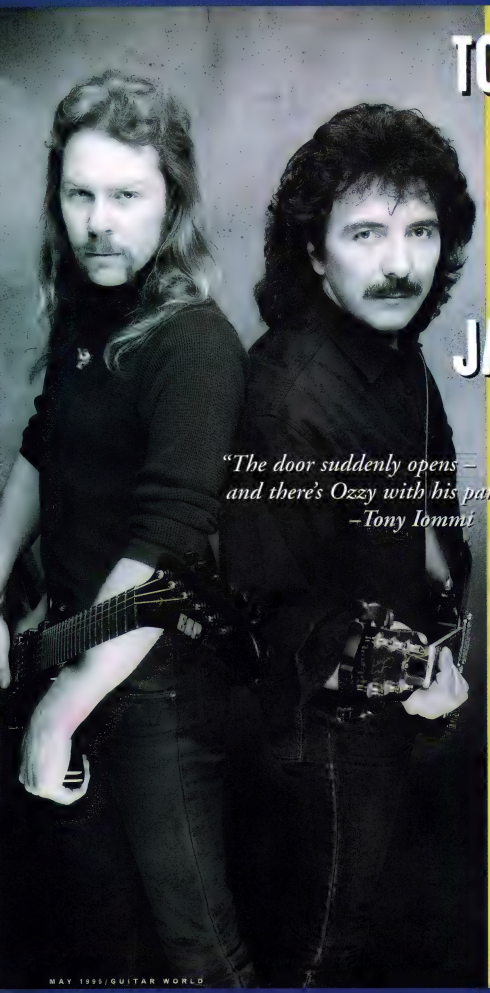

TONY IOMMI + JAMES HETFIELD

"The door suddenly opens – and there's Ozzy with his pants around his knees."
–Tony Iommi

BY BRAD TOLINSKI & ALAN PAUL

GW AUGUST 1992

GUITAR WORLD: Tony, what were your earliest influences?

TONY IOMMI: In the beginning I was primarily influenced by old blues records. Since liner notes on most blues 78's were either sketchy or non-existent, I never knew who half of the musicians were. I still don't. But those

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were my first influences, and my first bands were straight blues bands.

GW: How did you make the jump from playing traditional blues to composing the heavy, riff-oriented music that characterized Black Sabbath?

IOMMI: Well, to be honest, we just became so fed up with people talking while we were playing that we just said, "Screw it, let's turn it up, so they won't be able to chatter." [*laughs*] The band just kept getting louder and louder.

GW: James, how did Metallica come to pioneer thrash metal?

JAMES HETFIELD: Like Tony, we also played cover tunes when we first started. We were really influenced by the New Wave Of British Heavy Metal, which included bands like Venom and Diamond Head—underground stuff. We learned a bunch of their songs from a batch of obscure singles that Lars [*Ulrich, Metallica drummer*] had collected. Most people thought we were performing originals, because they had never heard any of this shit before—which was good for us! We took all the credit. You know: "Hey, you guys write good songs." "Yeah, I know." [*laughs*] We certainly weren't going to tell them the truth.

Eventually we started playing everything faster because, like Sabbath, the crowd wasn't paying any attention to us and that pissed us off. In L.A., people were just there to drink and see who else was in the club. We decided to try to wake everybody up by playing faster and louder than anybody else.

Nervousness also contributed to our sound. Lars was always nervous on stage, so he'd play faster and faster. That was a huge challenge for us, but nobody wanted to wimp out and tell him that he was playing too fast. We just figured, "Hell, we'll just play fast too." So it became part of a game.

GW: Tony, was it hard to play in a tough British factory town like Birmingham?

IOMMI: It had an effect on us. We were completely surrounded by violence and pollution, so that was a big part of our music. We were living our music.

GW: Weren't you and Ozzy Osbourne actually in different street gangs?

IOMMI: Yeah, I used to hate the sight of Ozzy. I couldn't stand him, and I used to beat him up whenever I saw him. We just didn't get on at school. He was a little punk. It's pretty amazing that he eventually became part of Sabbath. Bill [*Ward, Sabbath drummer*] and I were looking for a singer, and we spotted this advert that said, "Singer looking for a gig. Call Ozzy at..." I said to Bill, "I know an Ozzy. It can't possibly be that one." So we went to the address listed in the ad and knocked on the door. Sure enough, Ozzy appeared.

I said to Bill, "Forget it, forget it." But Bill wanted to chat with him. We talked, but when we left I said, "No way, Bill, I know him." Three weeks later, we ended up together anyway. Life moves in mysterious ways.

GW: Tony, what's your craziest Ozzy Osbourne story?

IOMMI: I don't know—there's so many. [*chuckles*] Wait, here's one. Actually, it's quite funny. We were all in an elevator in this real plush hotel, and Ozzy decides to take a crap. As he's doing it, the elevator is going down to the reception floor. The door suddenly opens—and there's Ozzy with his pants around his knees. And all these people in fur coats are just staring at him with their mouths open. [*laughs*]

HETFIELD: I heard one story, that Bill Ward showed up to go on tour one time with his only suitcase filled with beer. Is that true?

IOMMI: Well, Bill never used to take many clothes at all. And when he died, he'd have two suitcases: one with dirty clothes, and the other one with dirtier clothes. Bill was a character! Bill was our outlet, the one everybody picked on. I used to do terrible things to him. I actually set him on fire once—honest to God. We were recording *Heaven And Hell* [*Warner Bros., 1980*], and

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I said to Bill, "Can I set you on fire?" And he said, "Well, not now, not now." So I said, "Okay," and then forgot all about it.

An hour later Bill said, "Well, I'm going home now. Do you still want to burn me, or what?" I said, "Sure." So I got this bottle of petrol and tipped it on Bill, I set fire to him and—*voomph*. I couldn't believe it! He went up like a Christmas tree. Well, he knew I was going to burn him, but he didn't know to that extent. He screamed and started rolling around on the floor. His clothes started burning and his socks melted—the nylon socks stuck to his leg. I wasn't able to help him because I couldn't stop laughing.

It was actually pretty serious and he had to go to the hospital. I felt really bad. He had third degree burns on his arms and legs and everywhere. The next day his mother phoned me up and said, "You balmy bastard. It's about time you grew up. Our Bill is going to have to have his leg off." She exaggerated a bit. But things like that were a regular occurrence with Bill.

GW: Tony, you were one of the first guitarists to detune to Eb, which helped you create your dark signature sound.

IOMMI: People would always tell me, "You can't lower the pitch of your strings, that's not right." I actually used several different tunings. I would try anything. Occasionally, I'd tune as much as three semitones down for Ozzy, because he wouldn't be able to hit certain notes.

HETFIELD: Wow! So you tuned down to a C sharp or something?

IOMMI: We'd try anything to make our sound heavier.

HETFIELD: Wasn't it hard to stay in tune, especially since you use .008's?

IOMMI: It was. Particularly with my Gibson, because the neck would shift.

HETFIELD: On the other hand, the combination of light strings and detuning must've made it easy for you to bend strings and apply vibrato.

IOMMI: Actually, I *had* to use light strings. I had a work-related accident in the early Sixties that cut off the tips of my fingers. As a result, I can't bend heavier strings. I can't even feel the strings. [*Displays his truncated fingers.*] See, this one's cut off, and that one's gone off that way.

HETFIELD: [*visibly shaken*] Wow!

IOMMI: Suddenly, I had to develop a new way of playing. Ironically, I had the accident on the same day that I was supposed to quit my factory job to tour Germany with this group. So when I started playing again, I had to devise a new way. I used to play a lot with my forefinger and pinky because the two middle fingers were bandaged up. I learned to bend with my little finger a lot.

HETFIELD: Why do you need the thimbles that you put on your fingertips? Why can't you just use your shortened fingers?

IOMMI: Like that? No. There's only one layer of skin that covers the bone. Sometimes when I'm playing with the thimbles and they come off—*sshhh*!

HETFIELD: Ouch!

GW: Tony, do you ever listen to your old stuff? Do you listen to your albums?

IOMMI: Sure. Occasionally we'll get drunk and think, "What did we used to sound like?" And we'll put an old album on.

HETFIELD: I like listening to our old stuff. The other guys in the band will say things like, "Oh, I can't listen to this song because of such and such note I played." Especially Kirk [*Hammett, Metallica guitarist*]. I don't do that. I've completely forgotten about things. Either I was drunk or I didn't give a shit.

IOMMI: With every album there are certain bits you like and certain parts you don't like. I think most of our records were good for the time, but you're never satisfied.

HETFIELD: That's the cool thing, though. If you are satisfied, it's over. You gotta keep going. A guitar sound—it's never perfect. ●

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Tiki Drink

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May BRIAN

"Freddie knew exactly what he was doing. We just helped him bring it to life."

BY ALAN DI PERNA

In this January, 1993 interview, Brian May recalls some of his—and Queen's—finest recorded moments.

"Killer Queen"

Sheer Heart Attack (1975)

"I WAS ALWAYS very happy with this song. The whole record was made in a very realistic, man-like manner. I still enjoy listening to it because although there's a lot to listen to, it never gets cluttered. There's always space for all the little ideas to come through. And, of course, I like the solo, with that three-part section where each part has its own voice. What can I say? It's vintage Queen.

"The first time I heard Freddie play that song, I was lying in my room in Rockfield [*a residential recording studio in Wales*], feeling very sick. After Queen's first American tour I had hepatitis; then I had very bad stomach problems and had to have an operation. I remember just lying there, hearing Freddie play this really great song and feeling sad, thinking, 'I can't even get out of bed to participate in this. Maybe the group will have to go on without me.' No one could figure out what was wrong with me. But then

GW JANUARY 1993

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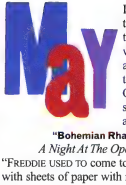

I went to the hospital and got fixed up, thank God. And when I came out again, we were able to finish off 'Killer Queen.' They left some space for me and I did the solo."

"Bohemian Rhapsody"

A Night At The Opera (1975)

"FREDDIE USED TO come to the studio armed with sheets of paper with notes scribbled all over them in his own particular fashion. It wasn't standard musical notation, but A's and B's and C's and sharps in blocks—like buses zooming all over his bits of paper. He had the song all worked out when he came in. We played a backing track which left the gaps. And he would go, 'bum bum bum bum, that's what happens here....' Freddie knew exactly what he was doing all along. He had it in his head. We just helped him bring it to life.

"We were stretching the limits of technology in those days. Because 'Bohemian Rhapsody' was entirely done on 16 track, we had to do a lot of bouncing and, as we went along; the tape got very thin. This 'legendary' story, which people think we made up, is true: we held the tape up to the light one day—we'd been wondering where all the top end was going—and discovered what was virtually a transparent piece of tape. All the oxide had been rubbed off. It was time to hurriedly make a copy and get on with it."

"We Will Rock You"

News Of The World (1978)

"THAT WAS A response to a particular phase in our career when the audience was becoming a bigger part of the show than us. They would sing all the songs. In a place like Birmingham, they'd be so vociferous that we'd have to stop the show and let them sing to us. So both Freddie and I thought it would be an interesting experiment to write songs with audience participation specifically in mind, figuring that everyone can stamp and clap and sing a simple motif. We did that record at Wessex, an old converted church that has a naturally good sound to it. There are no drums on there. It's just us, stamping on boards and clapping with many primitive delay machines. A bit of singing, a bit of guitar playing and that's it.

"Another One Bites The Dust"

The Game (1980)

"[*BASSIST*] JOHN DEACON, being totally in his own world, came up with this thing, which was nothing like what we were doing. " But It was the beginning of something quite big for us, because it was the first time that one of our records crossed over to the black community. We had no control over that; it just happened. We were forced to put out this single because so many stations in New York were playing it. It pushed that album from being a million-seller to a three-million seller in a matter of three weeks or so." ●

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20 ESSENTIAL ALTERNATIVE ALBUMS

By David Sprague

1. RAMONES

Ramones (Sire, 1976)

The alpha and omega of punk as we know it, this 14-song, 28-minute detonation called all manner of demons—from the Sex Pistols to Black Flag—from beneath the surface of a rock culture that had gone nearly a decade without a good shaking. There is more resonance in the first two chords of this maelstrom of trash culture and evangelical minimalism than in the combined back catalogs of 1976 chart mainstays Fleetwood Mac, the Eagles and Bad Company.

2. SEX PISTOLS

Never Mind The Bollocks, Here's The Sex Pistols (Warner Bros., 1977)

They were together for just over a year, but the Sex Pistols managed to pack a full career's worth of provocation—violence, arrests, three broken record contracts—into that 14-month period. The band also managed to squeeze out one album—a set that went a long way towards cementing the sound of the guitar-as-lawnmower—which, for the most part, merely repackaged its anti-hits: "Anarchy In The U.K.," "God Save The Queen," "Pretty Vacant." Despite—or perhaps because of—its overwhelming nihilism, it can be considered one of the great rock and roll albums of all time, a thought that would no doubt dismay Rotten, Vicious, Cook and Jones to no end.

3. NIRVANA

Nevermind (DGC, 1991)

One of only two albums—the other being *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*—to cleanly divide rock history into epochs, *Nevermind* had as much of an impact on the music *business* as any record of modern times. But even before the sociological baggage was tossed on board, it was a jaw-dropper: howls of rage grafted to hooks that could've come from a post-nuke Brill Building, plus guitars wielded reverently and then rendered into kindling. There was not a shred of artifice herein, making for magnificent listening and, in retrospect, great concern.

4. THE CLASH

London Calling (Epic, 1979)

You won't find many double-albums that couldn't easily be boiled down to a single disc, but this third album from what was once called "the only band that matters" has nary a weak link in the lengthy chain surrounding its expansive landscape. Joe Strummer and Mick Jones boldly mixed elements of rockabilly ("Brand New Cadillac"), bebop ("Jimmy Jazz") and ska ("Rudie Can't Fail") into a savory, singular brew. The result was this masterwork.

5. BLACK FLAG

Damaged (SST, 1981)

As galvanizing in its own way as, say, "Born To Run," this incendiary set was ubiquitous at a time when hardcore rose from the ashes of punk. Hewing to the notion that if loud and fast was good, twice as loud and twice as fast was better, these Angelenos gave voice to the unfocused rage that coursed through the collective consciousness of suburban youth. More than that, Black Flag proved that you could be credible and still create anthems—"TV Party," "Six Pack," "Rise Above"—at every turn.

6. R.E.M.

Murmur (IRS, 1983)

Whether you consider them the first college-radio supergroup, the auteurs of jangle-pop or just that mumbly guy and his pals, it's impossible to overstate the impact R.E.M. has had on modern rock. On this, their first album, the band played with quiet passion and impressionistic grace, deriving immense power from the gossamer Rickenbacker playing of Peter Buck as will as the inscrutable imagery of Michael Stipe. File under: modern roots-rock.

7. U2

War (Island, 1983)

Where most of the albums on this list are stripped-down products of punk's minimalist mindset, U2's third album is defiantly maximalist, packing every moment with more of everything—riffs, instruments, emotion. Guitarist Dave "The Edge" Evans gave songs like "Sunday Bloody Sunday" and "Two Hearts Beat As One" their remarkably spatially conscious feel, thanks to a playing style that all but eliminated chords in favor of brilliant, ringing arpeggios. Proof that sometimes more is more.

8. JANE'S ADDICTION

Ritual De Lo Habitual (Warner Bros., 1990)

The inexorable swirl of David Navarro's guitar—more reliant on blurred, between-note meanderings than on the notes themselves—cements the vaguely, well, ritualistic atmosphere of this unsettling underworld journey. Perry Farrell's advocacy of habits like shoplifting

("Been Caught Stealing") and group sex ("Three Days") may not be for everyone, but the pan-ethnic, post-Zeppelin rave-ups are easy to lose yourself in.

9. HÜSKER DÜ

Zen Arcade (SST, 1984)
The Amerindie underground's first honest-to-God concept album saw Bob Mould, Grant Hart and Greg Norton push boundaries of style and financial limitation (for a low-budget recording, the technique is nothing short of stunning). In true Lennon-McCartney fashion, Mould's angst-filled missives ("Something I Learned Today") and Hart's predilection for power-pop ("Turn On The News," "Never Talking To You Again") melded seamlessly.

10. SONIC YOUTH

Daydream Nation (Blast First, 1988)
One part dissonance and one part pop culture savvy, this album channeled Thurston Moore and Lee Ranaldo's multiple guitar tonalities (and atonalities) into easily grasped songs for the first time. Despite a cold and arty image, the quartet always exuded a sonic warmth.

11. THE REPLACEMENTS

Let It Be (Twin/Tone, 1984)
While their substance-fueled live shows raised recklessness to never-imagined heights, the 'Mats were more than just a traveling bacchanal—they were an eight-legged embodiment of rock and roll yin/yang. Paul Westerberg's songs—composed of equal parts goofiness ("Gary's Got A Boner") and chilling melancholy ("Answering Machine")—make for a potentially schizophrenic mix. But in the hands of his band, particularly the late Bob Stinson, it could come together (as it did here) with as much clarity of spirit as rock and roll ever saw.

12. RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS

Bloodsugarsexmagik (Warner Bros., 1992) They'd been giving up the funk for nearly a decade by the time this, their sixth, album was released, but the Chili Peppers never once let the almighty booty out of their sight. Flea's always-powerful bass playing transformed itself into a virtual force of nature on pelvic-directed songs like "Give It Away," leaving little doubt that the Peppers are the ultimate party band of the Nineties.

13. BEASTIE BOYS

Licensed to Ill (Def Jam, 1986)
This gaggle of privileged-class mooks turned from playing hardcore to rap in the mid-Eighties, bringing along enough lunkhead-rock imagery to make an implicit musical link explicit. Rick Rubin's brilliant production helped songs like "Fight For Your Right (To Party)" and "No Sleep Til Brooklyn" cross over. But it was the inspired, classically Noo Yawk stoopidity of the Beasties themselves that made this album vault to classic status in a number of genres.

14. THE CURE

Staring At The Sea (Elektra, 1986)
Though Robert Smith looks at the world through bleak-tinted glasses, his songs veer from terseness to elegance with surprising grace and an unwaveringly stark, undeniably compelling sound. This singles collection is the best compendium of the Cure's gloomy, monochromatic music. Those with social skills might even note that you can dance to (some of) it, too!

15. MINUTEMEN

Double Nickels On The Dime (SST, 1984) Simultaneously burying rock and praising it, these regular, lower-class Joes

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Tear Out
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from L.A.'s South Bay made music characterized in equal measure by brevity, angularity and righteousness. Although their songs often had no real center, the late D. Boon (guitar) Mike Watt (bass) and George Hurley (drums) had a stronger mortar instinct. It is what binds this staggering, 45-song collection of smash-jazz, art-funk, freeform-blues and just plain rock, and makes it the most fitting memorial to Boon, who died in a car crash a year after its release.

16. FUGAZI

Repeater (Dischord, 1990)
Steeped in the rhetoric and DIY sensibilities of the hardcore scene, Fugazi has always talked the talk—urging listeners to political correctness while doing their best to avoid turning their enormously successful band into a profit-making machine. None of that would matter much if Ian MacKaye and band didn't turn out strident, soul-stirring music that's as much a call to arms as it is an invitation to mosh. Austerity can be beautiful.

17. TALKING HEADS

Speaking In Tongues (Sire, 1983)
Who says art schoolers can't get down? With this ambitious, groove-oriented collection, the Heads attained a wildly electric synthesis of brains and boogie—one that gets particularly hot (no pun intended) on "Burning Down the House"—without once ceding their customarily tight control. On paper, the eclectic fusions—art-rock and rai, funk and ambient—sound less than palatable. Careening out of speakers, they're positively irresistible.

18. PERE UBU

Dub Housing (Chrysalis, 1978)
Although it might sound odd, the sound that's come to be called post-punk was perfected by these Clevelanders—together in various forms since 1974—long before punk came into existence. This second album fused Tom Herman's wiry, eerie guitar drone—some of the era's most foreboding playing—to synthesizer playing that replicated machine-shop noise with uncanny precision. Ubu's members called their music "avant-garage," a term befitting a sound that's as surreal and futuristic today as it was at the time of its release.

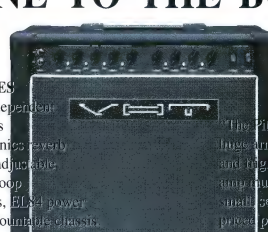
19. THE SMITHS

Hatful Of Hollow (Sire, 1984).
Perhaps the least intentionally commercial band ever to be known for its hit singles, the Smiths—thanks to the blatantly self-centered musings of leader (Stephen) Morrissey—proved that some bands can live by angst alone. That's a bit of an exaggeration, of course, as borne out by this 16-song singles collection. Still, even those who can't quite acquire a taste for Morrissey would be hard-pressed to find a more tasteful, hook-friendly guitarist than Johnny Marr, whose bright, spare playing belies the mope-rock pigeonhole.

20. PAVEMENT

Slanted And Enchanted
(Matador, 1992)
The lo-fi aesthetic hit its zenith on this dazzlingly disjointed, magnificently muddled collection of slacker-pop gems. Steven Malkmus and Scott Kannbery proved to be modern-day masters of irony and craft, infusing their gritty, hissy songs with a Steely Dan-styled detachment that screams modern. But, unlike their peers, Pavement steer as clear of pretense as they do clarity: in other words, you're in on the joke, not the butt of it. ●

TONE TO THE BONE



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ANGUS YOUNG

"The most important thing for me on stage is playing the guitar. The whole epileptic routine–whatever I do up there–comes out of that."

GW JANUARY 1993

BY ALAN DI PERNA

GUITAR WORLD: Your performance style is so strenuous. Have you ever hurt yourself on stage?

ANGUS YOUNG: Sure. I've lost teeth. I mean, I don't go out there to do myself deliberate injury. But when you're on the road for that length of time, you're bound to twist an ankle or something. I once had splints on my fingers. I soon learned how to play slide with them on, hah! I've jumped off amps and fallen ass over tit—made a complete fool of myself.

GW: What was your most embarrassing moment on stage?

YOUNG: Well, I've had my pants fall off. All of a sudden my wedding tackle was out there for all to see.

GW: What's the origin of that time-honored part of your show where you strip and moon the audience?

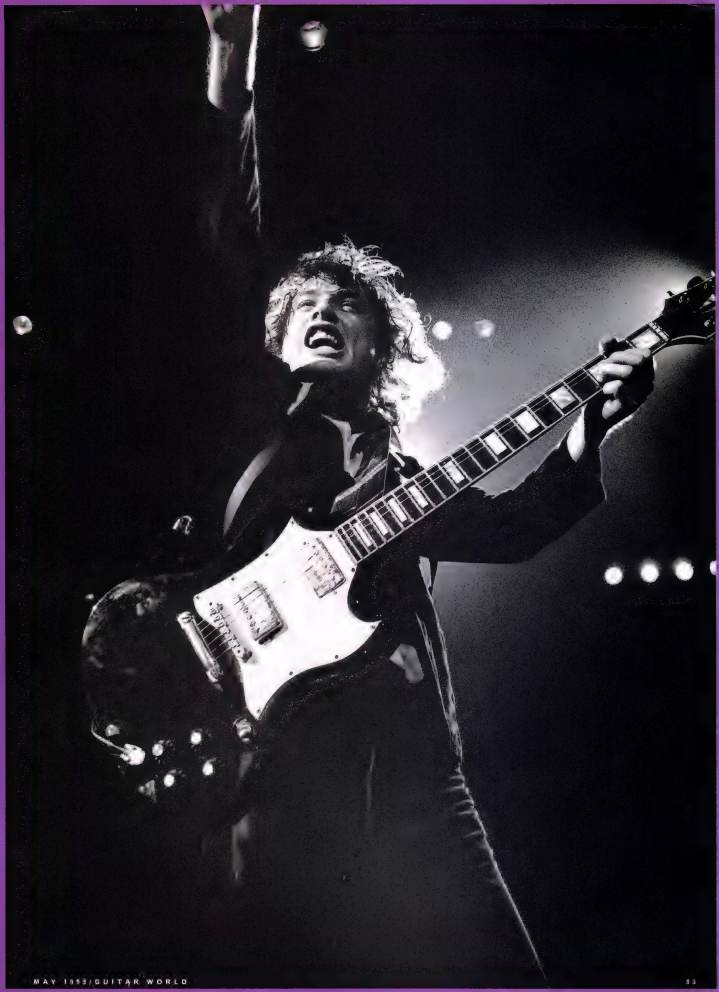
YOUNG: A lot of that came from the days when we were playing clubs that were small and overheated. I'd take off my jacket and half the audience would go "whooo." Especially with my physique—I'm not exactly Mr. Arnold Schwarzenegger. So it's all built off that; I'd take off my shirt and the drummer would go *ta-dump*. A bit of cheap cabaret, really.

And the mooning thing...well, it's a great way to shut up a heckler or get attention back to the stage. One time, at this big festival in England, this woman photographer with a real Dolly Parton physique got up and walked across the front of the stage. My brother [*rhythm guitarist Malcolm Young*] says, "You better do something quick to get their attention back." So I mooned 'em. That certainly jolted them back quick. Very popular with the law, too.

GW: You've said that you can't play guitar well unless you're jumping around like a lunatic.

YOUNG: Yeah, well, I go with the guitar because I'm pretty small. On most people, a Gibson SG looks small—like a violin. On me, it looks like a big guitar. I've got quite small fingers too. Now, when most people bend a string up, their finger bends the note. With me, my whole body's got to go... [*mimes how he uses his entire forearm to bend a string*]. I hug the guitar, if you want to get technical about it. Now for vibrato...

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID CORIO



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[*convulses with laughter as he illustrates*]...I've got to shake me leg a little. When you're a little guy, there's not much pull on the strings—especially with the heavier gauges.

The most important thing for me on stage is playing the guitar. The whole epileptic routine—whatever I do up there—comes out of that. I do become a little "possessed," as Malcolm says. But it's nothing Satanic. I become another person, but that other person comes from me concentrating really hard on playing the guitar.

GW: What's the origin of the schoolboy suit?

YOUNG: My sister. As a kid, I'd come right home from school and pick up my guitar, without changing out of my school suit. At dinner time I'd still be in the school suit, playing away. My sister always remembered that—she thought it was cute. And she was the one who said, "You know, it would be great if you'd get on stage with that school suit. It'll give people something to look at." I suppose she was right—at least it's worked for us.

GW: When did you start using a Gibson SG?

YOUNG: Just as I came out of school. I saved up my pesos and went to the guitar shop. I always wanted an SG. I had a friend, an American guy, who had a Gibson catalogue. As soon as I saw the SG, I knew that was the one I wanted; I think it was because the horn things [*the sharp cutaways*] reminded me a bit of myself. And I think that when I saw the Beach Boys with a Stratocaster that also swayed me the other way. It didn't look right.

GW: Has Malcolm ever played a solo on an AC/DC album?

YOUNG: There's a couple of solos from him on our first album. But even then, it's the way he plays rhythm—it's got that distinct sound, especially with that Gretsch [*Jet Firebird*]. I've tried to emulate his rhythm style myself at home, with one of his guitars, and it's no easy task. He's got those big, thick strings on it, like train tracks, you know? It's all in his wrist.

Malcolm just seems to get heavier and heavier with his strings. Now he's at the point where they're not making that gauge any more, since the youth want them lighter and lighter. They all want to run from one end of the fretboard to the other. They want to practice their scales. I mean that's all very good, so long as they do it at home.

GW: Do you like being in a band with your brother?

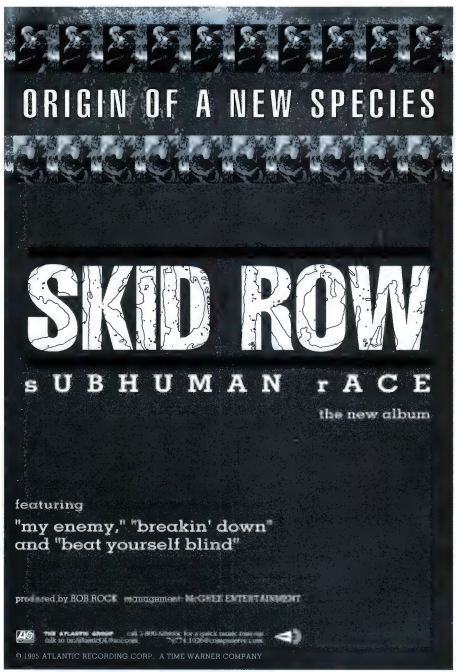
YOUNG: Well, it's good and bad. When I play something in the studio and the producer says, "Oh, that's great," I say, "Yeah, but what does Malcolm think?" 'Cause Malcolm knows me, and if he says yay or nay, it's the difference between getting to go home or sitting in the studio all night. So sometimes it's like having two producers. But that's good because it keeps you on your toes. And if I really get disheartened, I can just hand Mal the guitar and say, "Here, you try it." Then he'll show me up and I'll say, "Right, I'll beat him."

GW: Was the blues your primary influence?

YOUNG: Sure. That was my diet. Other kids would come to school with the latest Top 40 thing, but I was always buying imports like Muddy Waters. I was never a lover of harmony vocals. When I heard the Beach Boys, I just thought it was an older version of the Chipmunks, it was like [*sings in a nasal California accent*], "We're suurrfun Yew Ess Ayyy."

GW: So you weren't impressed by the "American-ness" of it all?

YOUNG: Oh, no. Don't get me wrong: I love what's come from America, musically. But I don't think people here see it for what it is a lot of the time. For me, the culture is blues music. I have great respect for Muddy Waters, B.B. King, Chuck Berry, Willie Dixon...If those people weren't there, you wouldn't have your Stones, your Zeppelins, your Who...all the big blues-based bands. The Beatles—same thing. I mean, if Paul McCartney played tomorrow, he would finish the night with seven or eight Little Richard songs. That, to me, is rock music. The other things are really the housewife, "cry in the tea towel" shit. That ain't rock music. ●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DAVID GILMOUR

"Wish You Were Here is the most satisfying album. I really love it. I mean, I'd rather listen to that than Dark Side Of The Moon."

In this February, 1993 interview David Gilmour recalls some of his—and Pink Floyd's—finest recorded moments.

GW FEBRUARY 1993

BY ALAN DI PERNA

"A SAUCERFUL OF SECRETS"

A Saucerful Of Secrets (1968)

GUITAR WORLD: Let's talk about the title track from *A Saucerful Of Secrets*. What made the band decide to take on a lengthy, abstract instrumental like that?

DAVID GILMOUR: That's hard to say. I had just joined the group shortly before that. I don't think the band really knew quite where they wanted to go after Syd [*Barrett*]'s departure. "A Saucerful Of Secrets" was a very important track; it gave us our direction forward. If you take "A Saucerful Of Secrets," "Atom

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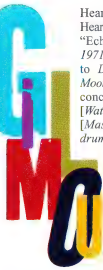

Heart Mother" [Atom Heart Mother, *1970*], and "Echoes" [Meddle, *1971*]—all lead logically to *Dark Side Of The Moon*. "A Saucerful" was conceived when Roger [*Waters*] and Nick [*Mason, Pink Floyd's drummer*] began drawing weird shapes on a piece of paper. We then composed music based on the structure of the drawing.

GW: You mean you used the drawing to diagram the dynamics?

GILMOUR: Yeah. We tried to write the music around the peaks and valleys of the art. My role, I suppose, was to try and make it a bit more musical, and to help create a balance between formlessness and structure, disharmony and harmony.

"ONE OF THESE DAYS"

Meddle (1971)

GW: The instrumental "One Of These Days" was born when someone plugged a bass into a "Binson Echorec." What is this device?

GILMOUR: The Binson was an Italian-made delay unit. It was strange because it didn't utilize tape loops. Instead, it used a metal recording wheel. You could get some wonderful delay effects that aren't attainable on anything that's been made since. "One Of These Days" evolved from some of my experiments with the Binson, as did "Echoes" [*also from* Meddle]. One day, Roger decided to try one of the techniques that I was developing on bass. And he came up with that basic riff which we all worked on and turned into "One Of These Days."

For the middle section, another piece of technology came into play: an H&H amp with vibrato. I set the vibrato to more-or-less the same tempo as the delay. But the delay was in 3/4 increments of the beat while the vibrato went with the beat. I just played the bass through it and made up that little section, which we then stuck on to a bit of tape and edited in. The tape splices were then camouflaged with cymbal crashes.

GW: So you played the bass on that track?

GILMOUR: Yes. The opening section is me and Roger. On "One Of These Days," for some reason, we decided to do a double track of the bass. You can actually hear it if you listen in stereo. The first bass is me. A bar later, Roger joins in on the other side of the stereo picture. We didn't have a spare set of strings for the spare bass guitar, so the second bass is very dull-sounding. *[laughs]* We sent a roadie out to buy some strings, but he wandered off to see his girlfriend instead.

GW: "One Of These Days" is an early track that crystallized for people what Pink Floyd was about. Did you have a sense within the band that you'd really discovered something?

GILMOUR: Well, I think "Echoes" is the masterwork of the album—the one where we were all discovering what Pink Floyd is about. "One Of These Days" is a little subsidiary piece that came out of the work on "Echoes." I always loved it. It's seminal, I suppose, yeah. A lot shorter, in any case—better for radio play. *Meddle* is really the album where all four of us were finding our feet—the way we wanted Pink Floyd to be. Much more than on *Ummagumma* or *Atom Heart Mother*.

"MONEY"

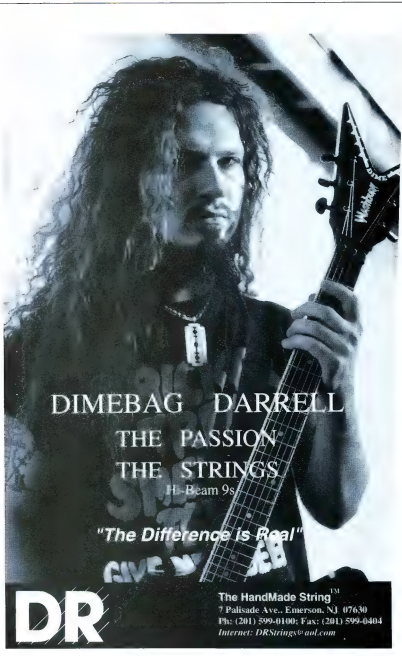
Dark Side Of The Moon (1973)

GW: Let's move on to *Dark Side Of The Moon*. Where did the famous 7/4 time signature for "Money" come from?

GILMOUR: It's Roger's riff. Roger came in with the verses and lyrics for "Money" more or less completed. And we just made up middle sections, guitar solos and all that stuff. We also invented some new riffs—we created a 4/4 progression for the guitar solo and made the poor saxophone player play in 7/4. It was my idea to break down and become dry and empty for the second chorus of the solo.

GW: Were you purposely trying to get away from just playing a 12-bar blues on guitar?

GILMOUR: No, I just wanted to make a dramatic effect with the three solos. The first solo is artificially double tracked. And the third one is actually double-tracked. I think I did the first two solos on a Fender Stratocaster, but the



last one was done on a different guitar—a Lewis, which was made by some guy in Vancouver. It had a whole two octaves on the neck, which meant I could get up to notes that I couldn't play on a Strat.

GW: What was [*producer/engineer*] Chris Thomas' role on *Dark Side Of The Moon*?

GILMOUR: Chris Thomas came in for the mixes, and his role, essentially, was to stop the arguments between me and Roger about how it should be mixed. I wanted *Dark Side* to be big and swampy and wet, with reverbs and things like that. And Roger was very keen on it being a very dry album. I think he was influenced a lot by John Lennon's first solo album [Plastic Ono Band, *Capitol, 1970*], which was very dry. We argued so much that it was suggested we get a third opinion. We were going to leave Chris to mix it on his own, with Alan Parsons engineering. And of course on the first day I found out that Roger sneaked in there. So the second day *I* sneaked in there. And from then on, we both sat right at Chris' shoulder, interfering. But luckily, Chris was more sympathetic to my point of view than he was to Roger's.

GW: Was that the first album where tension emerged between you and Roger?

GILMOUR: Ah, there's always been tension. But it was all quite controllable tension until after *The Wall*.

GW: There's creative tension and then there's outright hostility....

GILMOUR: There's creative tension and there's total egocentric megalomaniacal tension, if you like.

GW: Did the prospect of having to follow the huge success of *Dark Side Of The Moon* create a lot of pressure on you during the sessions for *Wish You Were Here*?

GILMOUR: Yeah, that's what the album's about, I think—as far as Roger's concerned, anyway. It's about that feeling we were left with at the end of *Dark Side*—that feeling of "What do you do when you've done everything?" But I think we got over that. And for me, *Wish You Were Here* is the most satisfying album. I really love it. I mean, I'd rather listen to that than *Dark Side Of The Moon*. Because I think we achieved a better balance of music and lyrics on *Wish You Were Here*. *Dark Side* went a bit too far the other way—too much into the importance of the lyrics. And sometimes the tunes—the vehicles for the lyrics—got neglected. To me, one of Roger's failings is that sometimes, in his effort to get the words across, he uses a less-than-perfect vehicle.

"COMFORTABLY NUMB"
The Wall (1979)

GW: "Comfortably Numb" is one of your few co-writing credits on *The Wall*. By all reports, it wasn't born easily.

GILMOUR: Well, there were two recordings of that which me and Roger argued about. I'd written it when I was doing my first solo album [David Gilmour, *Columbia, 1978*]. We changed the key of the song's opening from E to B, I think. The verse stayed exactly the same. Then we had to add a little bit because Roger wanted to do the line, "I have become comfortably numb." Other than that, it was very, very simple to write. But the arguments were about how it should be mixed and which track we should use. We'd done one track with Nick Mason on drums that I thought was too rough and sloppy. We had another go at it and I thought that the second take was better. Roger disagreed. It was more an ego thing than anything else. We really went head to head with each other over such a minor thing. I probably couldn't tell the difference if you put both versions on a record today. But anyway, it wound up with us taking a fill out of one version and putting it into another.

GW: Have disagreements between you and Roger ever reached the point of physical violence?

GILMOUR: It's never actually come to that, but they've threatened to. Once Roger and I had a real shouting match at this Italian restaurant in North Hollywood. We'd gone there with [*producer*] Bob Ezrin to have it out over something on *The Wall*—probably "Comfortably Numb," because the only thing I'd really argue with Roger over was my own music. With his music, I wouldn't bother to argue.

GW: Did your solo on "Comfortably Numb" take a long time to develop?

GILMOUR: No. I just went out into the studio and banged out five or six solos. From there I just followed my usual procedure, which is to listen back to each solo and mark out bar lines, to indicate which bits are good. In other words, I make a chart, putting ticks and crosses on different bars as I count through: two ticks if it's really good, one tick if it's good and a cross if it's no go. Then I just follow the chart, whipping one fader up, then another fader, jumping from phrase to phrase and trying to make a really nice solo all the way through. That's the way we did it on "Comfortably Numb." It wasn't that difficult. But sometimes you find yourself jumping from one note to another in an impossible way. Then you have to go to another place and find a transition that sounds more natural.

GW: While the earlier Pink Floyd records were concept albums, *The Wall* was the first one with an outright plot. What were your feelings about that?

GILMOUR: I *liked* Roger's story line. Although I didn't totally agree with it, you've got to let a chap have his vision. I just had a different view of our relationship with our audience than Roger did. Roger didn't like touring. And he felt there was no connection between him and the audience that was in front of him. I had a different view of it; I still do. And my view of what *The Wall* itself is about is more jaundiced today than it was then. It appears now to be a catalogue of people Roger blames for his own failings in life, a list of "you fucked me up this way, you fucked me up that way." ●

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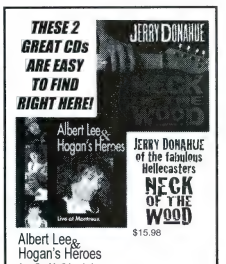
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"Unplugged was a great opportunity for me to pay homage to the things that originally influenced me."

GW JUNE 1993

ERIC CLAPTON

BY ALEX COLETTI

GUITAR WORLD: Tell me about the writing process for "Tears In Heaven."

ERIC CLAPTON: It was written for the film *Rush*. The timing was perfect because they needed a song about loss, and I had plenty of them. "Tears In Heaven" was actually in a very embryonic stage when I was approached, and I completed it for *Rush*. I needed the film to finish it, because otherwise I probably would have let it go. It was also a good opportunity for me to write about the loss of my son and have somewhere to put it—to channel it—because it didn't look like I was going into the studio in the near future. I really wanted to be able to say something about what happened to me, and the opportunity that this movie presented was excellent because it meant that I could write this song and express my feelings and have it come out quickly.

GW: Did composing that song become part of your healing process? And did performing it further that process?

CLAPTON: Yes. I think that with what happened to me last year—the loss of my son—my audience would have been very surprised if I didn't make some reference to it. And I wouldn't want to insult them by not sharing my grief with them in some way. It is a healing process for me, and I think it's important to share that with people who love your music.

GW: You performed a number of cover songs on *Unplugged*.

CLAPTON: This was a great opportunity for me to pay homage to the things that originally influenced me. For example, "Hey Hey" was written by Big Bill Broonzy, and it was probably the first blues song I ever heard. I used to play it in pubs when I was very young. I never felt that I had mastered it, so I wanted to give it another shot.

GW: "Nobody Knows You When You're Down And Out," which you recorded on the *Layla* album, has a

ILLUSTRATION BY STEVEN WACKSMAN

Fender

long history.

CLAPTON: That's an old Bessie Smith song which goes back to 1910 or 1915. I heard an English guy play it in the pubs when I was 14 or 15, and I learned it and played it around the pubs myself. It was part of my early, early repertoire. In fact, it was one of the first songs I felt I could sing because it was very melodramatic and I could put all this angst into it. I did also do it with Derek And The Dominos, but this is the way I originally did it with the acoustic guitar.

GW: You also did an arrangement of "Layla" that is very different from the original.

CLAPTON: Yeah. "Layla" sort of mystified me. I've done it the same all these years and never considered trying to revamp it, the way a lot of artists might. Bob Dylan, for instance, changes everything every time he plays a song. I thought this was a great opportunity to just take "Layla" off on a different path, and put it to a shuffle. For a start, making it acoustic denied all the riffs—which I think would have really sounded weak on the acoustic. So it just seemed to naturally become jazzier. And, of course, I'm singing it a whole octave down, which gives it a nice atmosphere.

"UNPLUGGED GAVE ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO THINGS THAT I'VE ALWAYS DONE AT HOME BUT DON'T DO ON STAGE."

GW: It was good to see you play dobro on "Running On Faith."

CLAPTON: Yeah. I played one on the original recording. I usually don't play it on stage, so that was another opportunity—*Unplugged* was great because it gave me the opportunity to do things that I've always done at home but don't do on stage.

GW: Do you often play slide at home?

CLAPTON: Not so much, actually, but I would like to play more slide, and I think it's something you have to be careful with on an electric. I mean it is ideally suited for acoustic guitar, and all of my original heroes played the slide and bottleneck, so maybe it's something I'll get into again.

GW: Speaking of original heroes, you played Robert Johnson's "Walkin' Blues."

CLAPTON: Yes, but I've turned it into a hybrid song, really. I borrowed the guitar part from one of the first Muddy Waters songs I ever heard, called "Feel Like Going Home," and then superimposed Robert Johnson's lyrics. It's sort of my simultaneous tribute to both of them. It's a piece I've played since I was 14, but I only recently decided to start singing it.

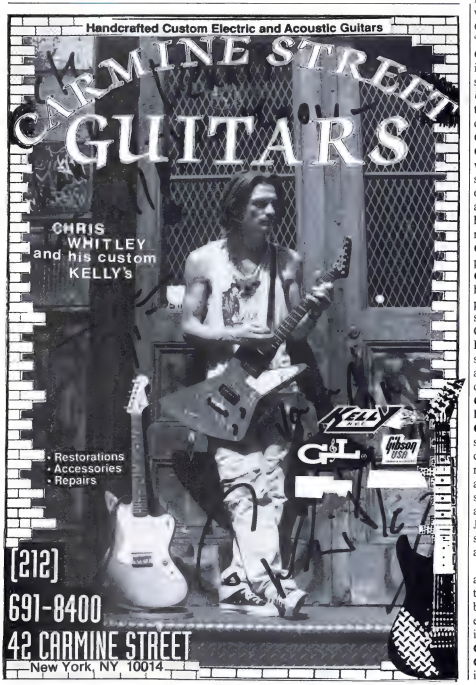
GW: You concluded the MTV set with another Robert Johnson song, "Malted Milk Blues."

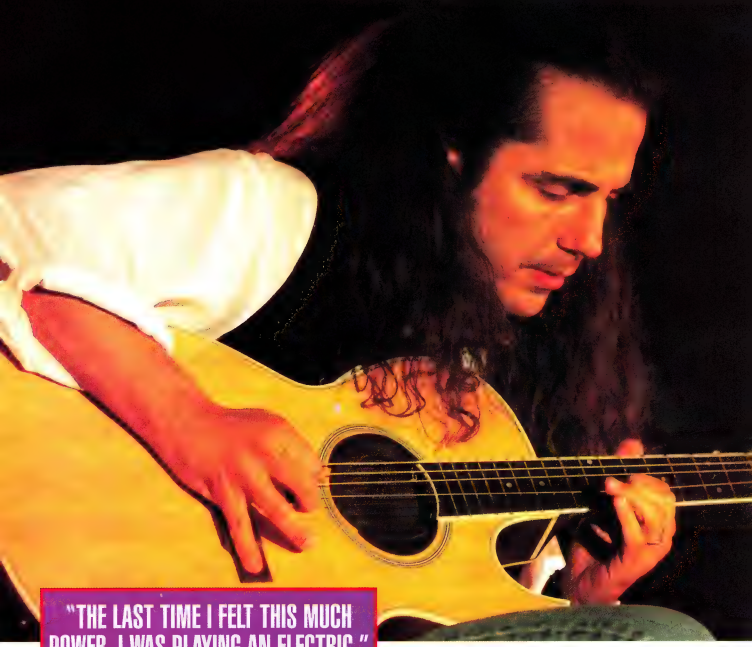
CLAPTON: "Malted Milk" is a peculiar song. It's very ironic, because it's quite clear that it's *not* malted milk he's referring to throughout the song. It came from a period where Robert was changing his style, and it sounds to me like he came across [*jazz and blues guitarist*] Lonnie Johnson in his travels. There was a massive shift in his style of accompaniment and his style of singing.

I've never approached this song before—and probably wouldn't have if I hadn't had this opportunity to try it out. It's a very beautiful song and very simple. I wanted to end the set with it because it sort of brings it back home for me.

GW: So is Robert *the* influence?

CLAPTON: He's the most important influence I've had in my life and always





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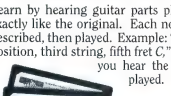

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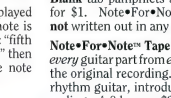

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will be, I think.

GW: Did you start out playing acoustic guitar?

CLAPTON: The first guitar I ever had was a gut-string Spanish guitar. I was only 13, and I talked my grandparents into buying it for me. I tried and tried and tried, but got nowhere with it. I finally gave up after a year and a half. I started getting interested in the guitar again after hearing Muddy Waters because it sounded like it was easier—wrong! [*laughs*] I wanted an electric guitar and, again, I talked my grandparents into buying me one. And, actually, within a very short period of time I got somewhere with it.

So I had two starts, really. However, the second time around I bumped into people who had the same interests—who liked Muddy Waters, Little Walter, Big Bill Broonzy, Robert Johnson. And those people I bumped into were the original Yardbirds; we used to play together a lot at parties and ended up forming an offi-cial band. That was really when I became a professional—it was within a very short amount of time.

GW: I'd never seen you play fingerstyle prior to this performance. Is this a new development?

CLAPTON: I did play a lot of fingerstyle when I first started playing. I could never really find the right combination of flat-pick or fingerpicks, so playing fingerstyle—with the bare fingers—is really the easiest way, though it's quite strenuous on the fingertips. But I've picked it up again in the last year or two. I think you get a nice tone that way; I wouldn't mind trying it on electric. There is a beautiful sound to be gained from the actual touch of the finger to the string, but that requires a lot of dexterity. Mark Knopfler's got it and Stevie Ray had it, but I haven't done it for a long time. It's something I just recently started to work on again.

GW: Is that why you're soaking your fingertips as we speak?

CLAPTON: You need surgical spirits to harden them up and witch hazel to take the sting out. That's the deal.

GW: Do you use all five fingers to pick?

CLAPTON: No, I use three and the thumb.

GW: Do you ever use a thumbpick?

CLAPTON: Yeah, I did the other day. But it throws it all out of balance. The thumb becomes incredibly loud, and then you need fingerpicks to balance it out. And then it's just like *Nightmare On Elm Street*—Freddy Krueger. ●

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"Whatever I do is dictated by the songs I write. The songs are purely on spark."

NEIL YOUNG

BY GARY GRAFF

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAY BLAKESBERG

GUITAR WORLD: I think people are fascinated with *Harvest Moon* [*Reprise, 1992*] because in some ways it is a step backwards, a sequel to *Harvest* [*Reprise, 1972*].

NEIL YOUNG: Yeah, inasmuch as it's unique for an artist to refer to another work that goes back so far, but is so akin stylistically. That's a unique perspective—to look at musicians and singers and hear how their voices and talents have changed over 20 years.

GW: The skeptic, of course, says that since *Harvest* was your biggest seller, you're simply trying to recreate that success.

YOUNG: Well, I'm not sure it is my biggest seller, though if it isn't, it's up there. Obviously, my record company has been saying for years what a nice thing it would be if I did this—but it wasn't just them. A lot of people I've met on the street have told me, "That's my favorite record. Will you ever do another one like that?" That's nice, but you can't really go home and write music that way. You write it off to, "That's a time of my life when I felt that way. Maybe I'll feel that way again." I had to wait for it to happen.

GW: *Harvest Moon* is such a departure from what you were doing just prior to its release. What gives?

YOUNG: I pushed myself to the limit on the *Ragged Glory* tour. It was a very emotional time because the country was in the middle of the Gulf War and I was trying to reflect that turmoil in my music. I was operating at super energy and playing my guitar at deafening volume levels. I kinda took that as far as I could, for now—there was no sense in beating it into the ground. I needed to get into something else, I guess.

GW: And that was *Harvest Moon*?

YOUNG: The next songs I started writing were real quiet. It felt real good to play like that. Once you do something as loud as *Ragged Glory* [*Reprise, 1990*] and *Weld* [*Reprise, 1991*], it's a great thing to be able to just pick up the acoustic guitar again.

See, whatever I do is dictated by the songs I write. The songs are purely on spark. I don't get a concept going and then try to write a song. Every time I try to do that, the songs are terrible.

GW: Were the songs on *Harvest Moon* composed differently from those on *Ragged Glory*?

YOUNG: No. Basically, I just write. Every song stands on its own. They come through to me and I just try to do them justice.

GW: You preceded the release of *Harvest Moon* with a solo acoustic tour—just the opposite of the way most people tour.

YOUNG: I wanted to see if I could perform the new material in front of an audience and hold their interest. It was an interesting challenge. In the beginning, I played in the Northwest and I think I did really well; the more remote the area, the more people really listen to what you're doing.

But all the other concerts I did seemed to work okay, too. I changed my show after a while. Three months into the tour I stopped doing as many new songs, because I'd proved that I could do it. So I just loosened up and did whatever I felt like. By the end of the tour I didn't even have a set list anymore.

That's the way it used to be when I played acoustic shows many years ago. The goal with this tour was to reawaken my ability to perform new songs at the drop of a hat and do the whole show and hold the audience with an acoustic guitar and new songs. That's what I used to do when I started. After you have all the trappings of success, I guess, everybody expects you to just go out with the big tour and the big production, and I lost that special sense I got from performing an acoustic show.

GW JUNE 1993

GW: There have been rumors that you have been compiling a massive retrospective box set. What is the status of that project?

YOUNG: We're still working on it. There's really no reason to stop until you're finished, and I don't think I'm finished yet. We don't know a lot of the details yet. It's draining, but it has to be done.

GW: It must be an interesting exercise, poring over your past like that. Does it affect your new work?

YOUNG: It has had an impact—some subliminal effect—on my later work. I started working on it just around the time I was recording *Freedom* [*Reprise, 1989*]. The *Ragged Glory* stuff probably came from going through the archives, trying to isolate the Crazy Horse story. I became immersed in what it was that made Crazy Horse happen, and it inspired me to go do it again. I could feel my body wanting to play the guitar the way I play with Crazy Horse.

GW: How would you describe that feeling?

YOUNG: My solos with Crazy Horse are not really me. It's more like us—Ralph Molina's cymbals, the high sound of my guitar, Billy Talbot's bass as the rumble underneath it. It's a lot like classical music—a Wagnerian, melodic thing—developing themes, enveloping all kinds of emotions and sweeping through things, and going off on tangents and returning. It's very spontaneous. It's set up to be spontaneous. There are no rules of the road. You can go anywhere.

GW: It's that really electric Crazy Horse stuff that has earned you the title, "godfather of grunge." Do you hear your influence on those bands?

YOUNG: I can hear some of the influence I've had on some of these bands—certain guitar chords, sounds or lyrical attitudes pop through that are reminiscent of some idea I had somewhere. Mostly I hear a lot of questions like yours—and that's all I hear about it. I'm kinda removed from reality... ●

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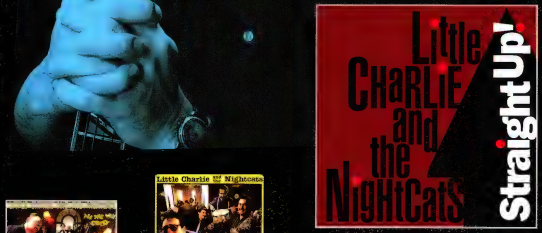

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ERIC JOHNSON & B.B. KING

GW NOVEMBER 1993

"Many times during a performance, people will see perspiration on my face—they think. But many nights I am crying—I cry in both joy and sorrow."
—B.B. King

BY HAROLD STEINBLATT & BRAD TOLINSKI

GUITAR WORLD: Eric, you interrupted an intensive recording schedule to tour with B.B. King and Buddy Guy. What did you hope to get out of the experience?

ERIC JOHNSON: My motivation was strictly musical. We were in the middle of recording my next album when my booking agency called and said, "We know you aren't interested in going out on the road, but we thought we'd just tell you about this interesting tour..." And as soon as they mentioned B.B. King and Buddy Guy, I said, "I'm packing my bags."

I saw it as a very precious opportunity to meet and play with B.B, who was one of my major influences, and it's turned out to be an experience that I'll always cherish.

GW: Do you recall the first time you heard B.B. play?

JOHNSON: I became interested in the blues when I was 11 or 12, after hearing John Mayall and the Bluesbreakers with Eric Clapton. Then some friends of mine turned me on to B.B. and Albert King—the guys that influenced the Bluesbreakers. The first thing I remember hearing by B.B. was *Live At The Regal* [*MCA, 1965*], which I really liked. But what really grabbed me were some of his Fifties' sessions—he was playing a Stratocaster and getting feedback and distortion way before anybody! Amazing.

GW: What do you think young

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rock guitarists can learn from B.B. King?

JOHNSON: There are so many things. It's important to listen to the subtle inflections of his music—his vibrato, the way he pulls his strings—all the little nuances that set a great musician apart from a good one. Anyone can learn a vocabulary or the alphabet, but B.B. creates poetry. Listen to any B.B. King album and you'll hear how a master musician is able to make one or two notes really say something meaningful. B.B., and the blues in general, taught me the value of tone and phrasing—all the things that give your playing character.

GW: B.B., do you think that the blues will continue to thrive and be a relevant musical form? The "fathers," like yourself, John Lee Hooker and Buddy Guy, are finally doing well and getting their proper recognition, but there don't seem to be any "sons" that have captured the public's imagination.

B.B. KING: I don't fear for the blues. I think the blues will survive, but in a different form. So if you're asking me, if I died tomorrow, would the blues cease to continue, I would say, "No." I think you have some youngsters today that play better than I ever did. The difference, though, is that these are different times.

GW: How are the times different?

KING: Well, when I was coming up, the blues was just starting to come into existence. We didn't even necessarily call it the "blues." I used to play what I called "lonesome songs," to haunt the lady that I loved, or the woman I was trying to get. When I say "haunt," I mean I was trying to get her to feel sorry for me.

I *had* to to get their sympathy, because I sure wasn't going to impress them with my looks. I was no Clark Gable or Sidney Poitier when I was coming up—I was kind of scrawny and sort of bad-looking—but by singing and playing the guitar, at least I showed that I was trying. I guess that was a big part of my appeal.

But I didn't just play these songs to attract women. They were also a way to communicate my deepest emotions. Many times during a performance, people will see perspiration on my face—they think. But many nights I am *crying*—I cry in both joy and sorrow. I don't think kids today are as concerned about that feeling of communicating, or trying to communicate, without sex.

GW: Would you say that the music of today is different because the entertainers are too full of themselves—that they don't really care about their audience?

KING: I'll let Eric comment on that. I ain't gonna get into that at all! [*laughs*]

JOHNSON: I think a real entertainer is cognizant of the people he's playing to. One of the things I'm learning on this tour by watching B.B. and Buddy is how to reach out to the audience. In the past I've thought, "Oh yeah, go out and smile and talk to the people." But, like B.B. was saying, you want to create a mutual bond that happens in an absolutely sincere way. You want to entertain your audience, but you want them to walk away with something more than just "entertainment."

The importance of communicating with your audience is a valuable lesson to learn, and an easy one to forget. It's a real problem for me because I play in a power trio, and I have to think about so many things—switching my effects, playing and singing—that I get preoccupied with the mechanics and don't reach out and let the audience know how I'm feeling. That just recently began to dawn on me, especially after watching these guys in action. I discovered that when I reach out, the whole quality of the performance changes. Once you allow that communication to flow, you can play twice as well as you did when you were thinking about your pedal board or something technical.

Some nights, I get chills watching B.B. I get chills from his technique and execution, but also from seeing how he projects himself. It's a heart thing. All of a sudden I realize, "Yeah, right! That's why we're doing this." It's really wonderful.

GW: Eric, what is the most challenging aspect of this tour?

JOHNSON: The thing that's got me freaked out is B.B.'s singing. I love the way he sings. Every night after the show, my engineer asks me why I'm singing so far away from the mic. It's because I'm singing with these great singers, and I'm scared. It's hard to try and measure up to these guys. Everything on the tour is great, but having to compete with B.B. and Buddy vocally is terrifying.

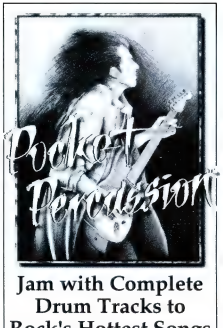
KING: We're learning from each other. Every night I learn something from Eric—I heard him play some things the other night that I never heard *anyone* play before. And the great thing about knowledge is that once you learn something, you never forget it. It's like riding a bicycle...or sex. [*laughs*]

GW: Or riding a bicycle while having sex?

KING: [*laughs harder*] Oh c'mon now! You know what I'm saying.

GW: B.B., how would you define the blues?

KING: Blues is a tonic for what ails you. It's for when you feel happy or sad. People think that the blues is about a bunch of guys standing around and crying, but that's just one side. Blues encompasses a lot of things. When I sing, "I got a sweet little angel, I love the way she spreads her wings. When she spread her wings around me, I get joy and everything," that's not being blue! How in the heck can that be blue? It's *called* the blues, but it's on the positive side. On the other hand, if I sing, "Nobody loves me but my mother, and she could be jivin' too," that is the negative side. And that's the kind you sing when you want to cry in your beer. ●



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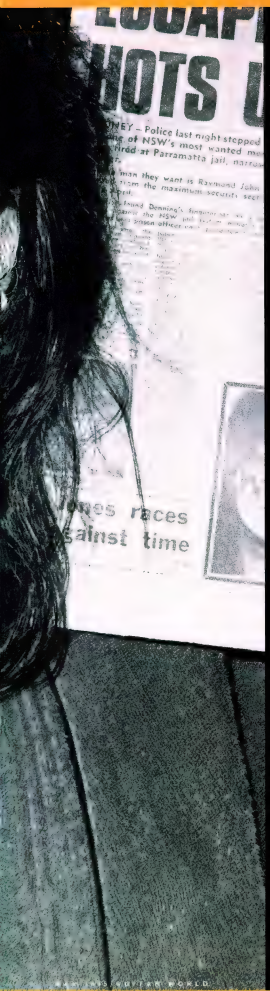

GUITAR WORLD: What would you say is the best Kiss album?

ACE FREHLEY: I'd say our first album [Kiss, *Casablanca, 1974*]. I think it captured a raw innocence that we had at the time, something the band never got back.

GW: What about your least favorite Kiss album?

FREHLEY: Definitely *The Elder* [*Casablanca, 1981*]. That album was really the icing on the cake, as far as my leaving the band was concerned. For starters, they brought in Bob Ezrin to produce, who I don't relate to that well. Plus, I felt that the music on that album just wasn't where we should have been going at that point. I felt that we should have done a real raw, heavy album instead of a slick, bullshit concept album. When I heard the final mix of that album, I didn't even want it released, but I was out-voted. They cut out half of my guitar solos without telling me—and I had done some amazing stuff. I remember taking the cassette and smashing it against a wall. And it was our least successful record. So I know that my gut reaction was right.

GW: Which album were you least involved in?

FREHLEY: *Creatures Of The Night* [*Casablanca, 1982*]. I really don't remember playing anything on that album. That was around the time I had my car accident. I had already made the decision to leave the group, so that album wasn't too important to me. Also, the solo in "Sweet Pain," from *Destroyer*—that's not me. They replaced my solo with someone else's without ever telling me. I felt that was disrespectful on their part.

GW: And which album features your best lead work?

FREHLEY: I'd have to say my solo album [Ace Frehley, *Casablanca, 1978*]

GW: Were you usually able to nail a solo in a few takes, or did it take some time?

FREHLEY: As I've learned throughout my career, my best solos are those I get on the first, second or third takes. Usually it's a first take, and I'll punch in where I might have fucked up. I'm real spontaneous when it comes to working in the studio. Paul [*Stanley*] and Gene [*Simmons*], on the other hand, would beat a song like a dead horse and do something over and over until they were satisfied.

GW: What was it like collaborating with Paul on the guitar parts?

FREHLEY: We never really had a close working relationship. He would write songs and work out most of the rhythms, and I would just come up with the solos and/or a complementary rhythm part. Like in "Strutter"—I wrote those inverted chords, and I think they were a great addition to the song. It's funny, but Paul and I never wrote a song together.

GW: What were your personal relationships with Paul and Gene like while you were in Kiss?

FREHLEY: We were good friends in the beginning, but towards the end we were just tolerating each other. It got to the point where we really didn't even want to talk; after a gig, we would each get in separate limos and go our own ways. We started communicating with each other through our lawyers. I think a lot of it had to do with our success—the fame, the money and the pressure of the whole business.

GW: Who was your closest confidant in the band?

FREHLEY: I gravitated toward Peter [*Criss*] because, at the time, we were both party animals who came from similar backgrounds—we were both street kids who grew up in gangs. There was a camaraderie between us right from the start—something neither of us could ever have with Paul and Gene, because they both came from very different backgrounds.

GW: How did Peter's departure affect you?

FREHLEY: I felt a huge loss. You know, I really believe that, no matter how fucked up any of us were—and we were all fucked up in some ways, and not just because of alcohol and drugs—there was a chemistry between us that will never be recaptured, unless the four of us reunite. So when Peter left, I really felt a great chemical imbalance in the band. And even though I loved Eric [*Carr, Criss' replacement*], God rest his soul, losing Peter upset the balance of the band a little too much.

GW: Did Peter's absence further alienate you from Gene and Paul?

FREHLEY: After he left, I realized that I had lost my decision-making power within the band. Prior to his leaving, the four of us voted on things democratically—be it our choice of producer or naming an album or whatever. But with Peter gone, and Eric not voting because he was just a hired gun, Paul and Gene were able to out-vote me two-to-one on everything. They started to take complete control of the band, and eventually they were making decisions without even consulting me—which was one of the main reasons why I left.

GW: By the late Seventies, Kiss had become a financially successful corporation. Was it difficult to stay focused on making music?

FREHLEY: Definitely. The business end of it got way out of control. I can remember going to business meetings where there were these knuckleheads in suits, and I'd walk in wearing jeans and holding a bottle of beer. On the table in front of me would be a 30-page document filled with information about all of our money. Some guy would start talking about this real estate investment we had and someone else would talk about drilling for oil or some crazy shit [*laughs*], and I'd say to myself, "What the fuck am I doing here? This is not why I got into rock and roll." Gene would show up at those meetings in a suit with an attaché case—he became one of

"them" after a while. It's a real strange thing when the guys in your band start turning into accountants. [*laughs*]

GW: How did you feel about the band's image adorning everything from transistor radios and record players to jigsaw puzzles and Colorforms?

FREHLEY: I didn't agree with all the merchandising—the lunch box, the cards, the dolls, etc. I didn't want us to be a teeny-bopper group, and all that merchandise was putting us in that category. I think it turned off a lot of our hard-core fans—the fans that used to come see us in small clubs when we were just a loud, kick-ass rock band.

GW: At what point did the band start earning serious money?

FREHLEY: I think it was around 1977, between *Love Gun* and *Alive 2*. At that point, we were absolutely rolling in dough; our bank accounts were up to seven figures each. We hit our peak financially around '78, and as our popularity decreased, so did the money we made. I think the last huge money-making tour I did with Kiss was in '78—I don't think they'll ever make that much money on a tour again.

GW: What was your financial situation like when you left the band?

FREHLEY: When I left, I got a cash settlement, and then I continued to be paid royalties from the album sales. And the Kiss catalog sells constantly—it's enough money for me to live comfortably without ever working again. But when I left, I wasn't making nearly as much money as I had in '78, and I definitely had to tone down my lifestyle—I couldn't buy Porsches and Mercedes on a whim, like I could before. But at least I could live comfortably. And I'll tell you, I'm much happier now than when I was a multi-millionaire.

GW: Did having all that money have a negative effect on you?

FREHLEY: Definitely. I just didn't enjoy things as much as I do now. I mean, when you see something in a store that you really want, and you save your money and get it a month later, you enjoy it because you earned it. But when you can walk into a store and buy anything you want, it takes the enjoyment out of having money. Plus, it really does a number on your head—it makes you feel like you can do anything.

GW: What happened the day you quit the band?

FREHLEY: You have to realize that there wasn't a specific day where I just got up and said, "I quit." It was a slow progression. In fact, I think I might have done the whole thing through my attorney. Paul and Gene knew that, with the success of my solo album, I wanted to go my own way and have my own band. So when I finally did leave, it was no surprise to them.

GW: Were you scared to leave such a successful band?

FREHLEY: Definitely. But it was more scary to know that if I had stayed in the group, I probably would have self-destructed and killed myself. You know, there were plenty of times when, driving home to Connecticut from the city, I contemplated just driving my Porsche into a fucking tree and ending it all. So I had to choose the lesser of two evils, and bank on my own talent to get me through.

GW: Was it a tough adjustment?

FREHLEY: Yeah. I was very scared when I left because I didn't know if people were going to accept me without the makeup and the other guys around me. I had to overcome a lot of hurdles once I left, but I did it.

GW: What was it like to break free of all the mystique surrounding the band?

FREHLEY: You know, after a while, putting on that makeup every day was like wearing a noose around our necks. There were times when my skin would break out from the silver makeup. I had an allergic reaction to it once in Paris—I woke up with my eyes swollen shut—so we had to get a doctor to come in and shoot me up with all kinds of crap to get me through the day. But even though I was glad to be free of all that once I left the band, there were still times when I missed it. ●

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15 ESSENTIAL METAL ALBUMS

By Jeff Gilbert, Don Kaye, Jeff Kitts & Brad Tolinski

1. BLACK SABBATH

Paranoid (Warner Bros, 1970)
The album that defined metal, musically, sonically and thematically. Hate-mongers ("War Pigs"), lunatic robots ("Iron Man") and schizos ("Paranoid") dance a jig while Sabbath's four horsemen of the apocalypse play instruments of mass destruction. The star of the show is Tony Iommi's detuned SG, which pukes the largest, loudest guitar sound known to man. Add Geezer Butler's sci-fi lyrics and Ozzy's prophet-in-the-wilderness vocals and you have the rock equivalent to The Book Of Revelations.

2. METALLICA

Ride The Lightning (Elektra, 1984)
James Hetfield fused punk rock's aggression and velocity with the New Wave Of British Heavy Metal and gave birth to the Golden Age Of Metal.

3. KISS

Alive! (Casablanca/Mercury, 1975)
With their flashpots, grease paint, comic bookisms, walls of Marshalls and hooks galore, Kiss shepherded an entire generation through puberty, introducing millions to the decadent joys of money, power, crass capitalism and rock and roll. Kiss were rock as Roman spectacle; this album made you feel like you were there.

4. LED ZEPPELIN

Led Zeppelin II (Atlantic, 1969)
Zep was always too arty and eclectic to be considered a real metal band—except on this supremely sexist ode to the region below the belt. For sheer power-chord mania and horny, guttural hoo-ha, it just doesn't get any better than "Whole Lotta Love" and "Heartbreaker." But the real key to the mighty blimp's power was their prodigious ability to make their plutonium swing, rather than plod.

5. VAN HALEN

Van Halen (Warner Brothers, 1978)
In the late Seventies, Van Halen's glitzy, Hollywood rock singlehandedly rescued heavy metal from the devouring, polyester jaws of disco. While much has been written about Edward Van Halen's revolutionary lead guitar acrobatics, it was his impossibly huge "brown sound" and chunky rhythm playing that made "Runnin' With The Devil" sound like more than an idle boast.

6. SLAYER

Reign In Blood (Def American, 1986)
Thrash metal's finest 28 minutes. A quickie, to be sure—but it got the job done.

7. OZZY OSBOURNE

Blizzard Of Ozz (Jet, 1980)
When Black Sabbath and Ozzy Osbourne parted company in 1979, fans wondered who would prosper more. *Blizzard* was Ozzy's decisive answer. Brilliantly crafted songs like "Crazy Train" and the infamous "Suicide Solution" were lifted by Randy Rhoads' inspired combination of classical influences and state-of-the-art techniques. Randy's sound and stunning melodicism made him an instant hero, a status only magnified over the years by his untimely death.

8. AC/DC

Back In Black (Atlantic, 1980)
Here, the brothers Young wrote 10 songs that proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that heavy, blues-based rock could still be a commercial force. Angus also became a bona fide guitar hero, sticking to his roots while the rest of the world was being converted to the Church Of Van Halen. Simplicity and power—what *Back In Black*, and all great heavy metal, is about.

9. GUNS N' ROSES

Appetite For Destruction (Geffen, 1987)
Axl N' Slash set out to copy Aerosmith. But something went right along the way, and they created one of the most pissed-off, high-octane rock records since the Sex Pistols' debut.

10. SOUNDGARDEN

Badmotorfinger (A&M, 1991)
Masterful grunge by the godfathers of the Seattle sound. Guitarist Kim Thayil makes feedback a household word, and demonstrates why a guitar doesn't necessarily have to be in tune to sell a million records.

11. JUDAS PRIEST

Sad Wings Of Destiny (RCA, 1976)
Judas Priest's democratic twin-guitar architecture revolutionized hard-rock orchestration, laying the foundations for such formidable bands as Queensrÿche, Iron Maiden and Metallica. This ferocious gem is as hard as they come.

12. METALLICA

Master Of Puppets (Elektra, 1986)
Hetfield, Hammett and company perform the impossible, blending lofty social commentary and crafty, complex arrangements—without compromising any of the band's inherent metallic crunch.

13. MEGADETH

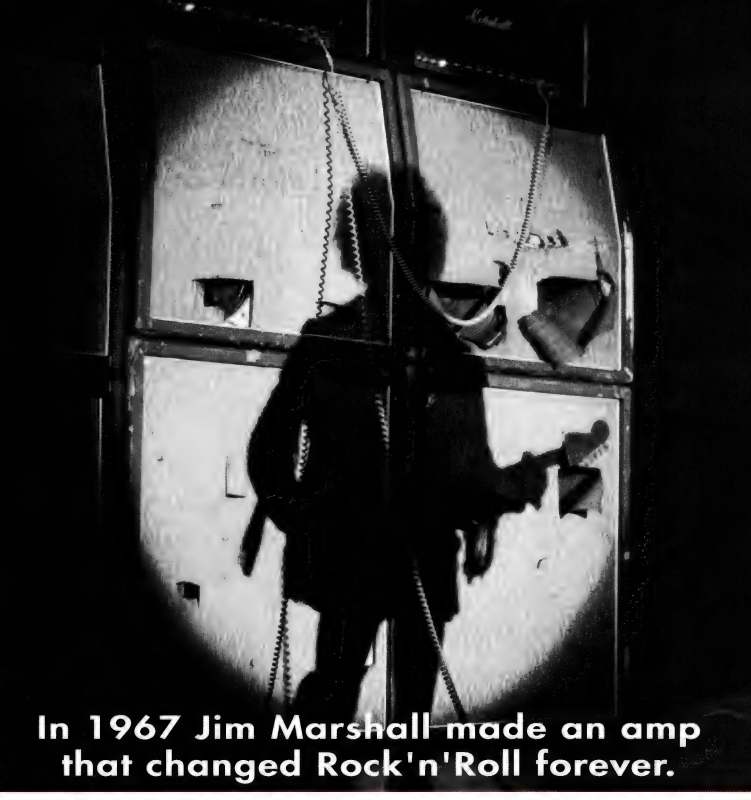
Rust In Peace (Capitol, 1990)
Some of the most destructive 10-minute, finger-blistering guitar battles ever fought on disc. And you thought Mustaine snarls because his G-string is too tight.

14. IRON MAIDEN

The Number Of The Beast (Capitol, 1982)
Iron Maiden soars with unbelievably intense and melodic guitar solos, galloping bass lines and Wagnerian vocals, all in a vain attempt to mask the album's real message: "Bond with us, won't you, in a consumer sense."

15. MÖTLEY CRÜE

Shout At The Devil (Elektra, 1983)
Pop rock so explosive it would have killed Life cereal spokesboy Mikey—even without the Coca-cola!



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JIMMY PAGE

BY BRAD TOLINSKI
WITH GREG DIBENEDETTO

GW DECEMBER 1993

"I wanted artistic control in a vise grip, because I knew exactly what I wanted to do with Zeppelin."

GUITAR WORLD: Let's start from the beginning. What did you want Led Zeppelin to be?

JIMMY PAGE: I had a lot of ideas from my days with the Yardbirds. The Yardbirds allowed me to improvise a lot in live performance and I started building a textbook of ideas that I eventually used in Zeppelin. In addition to those ideas, I wanted to add acoustic textures. Ultimately, I wanted Zeppelin to be a marriage of blues, hard rock and acoustic music, topped with heavy choruses—a combination that had never been done before. Lots of light and shade in the music. A prime example of that is "Babe, I'm Gonna Leave You" [Led Zeppelin, *Atlantic, 1969*].

GW: In addition to having such a strong musical direction, you also had a unique approach to the business

PHOTOGRAPHY BY NEAL PRESTON

aspect of the band. By self-producing the first album and tour, weren't you attempting to keep record company interference to a minimum while maximizing the band's artistic control?

PAGE: That's true. I wanted artistic control in a vise grip, because I knew exactly what I wanted to do with Zeppelin. In fact, I financed and completely recorded the first album before going to Atlantic. It wasn't your typical story where you get an advance to make an album—we arrived at Atlantic with tapes in hand.

The other advantage to having such a clear vision of what I wanted the band to be was that it kept recording costs to a minimum. We recorded the whole first album in a matter of 30 hours. That's the truth. I know because I paid the bill. [*laughs*] But it wasn't all that difficult because we were well-rehearsed, having just finished a tour of Scandinavia, and I knew exactly what I wanted to do in every respect. I knew where all the guitars were going to go and how it was going to sound—everything.

GW: The stereo mixes on the first two albums were very innovative. Were they mapped out ahead of time as well?

PAGE: I wouldn't go that far. But, certainly, after the overdubs were completed I had an idea of the stereo picture and where the echo returns would be. For example, on "How Many More Times" [Led Zeppelin], you'll notice there are times where the guitar is on one side and the echo return is on the other. Those things were my ideas.

I would say the only real problem we had with the first album was leakage from the vocals. Robert's voice was extremely powerful and it would get on some of the other tracks. But oddly, the leakage sounds intentional. I was very good at salvaging things that went wrong. For example, the rhythm track in the beginning of "Celebration Day" [Led Zeppelin III, *Atlantic, 1970*] was completely wiped by an engineer. I forget what we were recording, but I was listening through the headphones and nothing was coming through. I started yelling, "What the hell is going on!" Then I noticed that the red recording light was on what used to be the drums. The engineer had accidentally recorded over Bonzo! And that is why you have that synthesizer drone from the end of "Friends" going into "Celebration Day," until the rhythm track catches up. We put that on to compensate for the missing drum track. That's called "salvaging." [*laughs*]

GW: How did Atlantic react when you delivered the first Zeppelin album?

PAGE: Atlantic's reaction was very positive—I mean they signed us, didn't they? And by the time they got the second album [Led Zeppelin II, *Atlantic, 1969*] they were ecstatic.

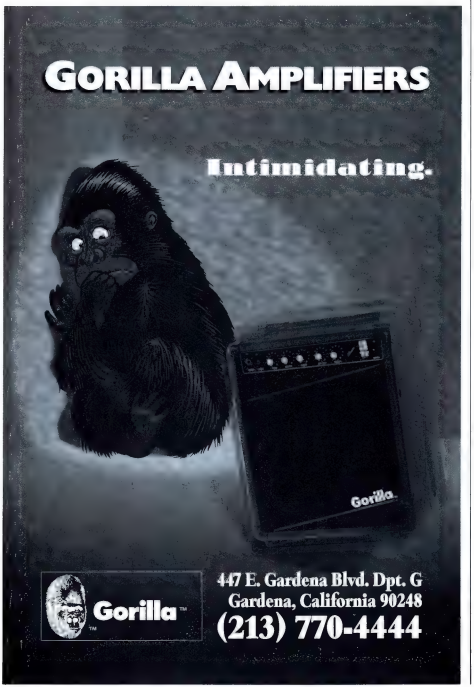
GW: *Led Zeppelin I* and *II* are extraordinarily three-dimensional. What role did your engineers play?

PAGE: Glyn Johns was the engineer on the first album; he had a bit of an attitude problem. I'll tell you what he did—he tried to hustle in on a producer's credit. I said, "No way. I put this band together, I brought them in and directed the whole recording process, I got my own guitar sound—I'll tell you, you haven't got a hope in hell." And then we went to Eddie Kramer for the second album and Andy Johns after that. I consciously kept changing engineers because I didn't want people to think that they were responsible for our sound. I wanted people to know it was me.

GW: What was your biggest accomplishment as a producer/engineer?

PAGE: The one major thing I contributed was miking drums in an ambient way; nobody was doing that. When I was playing sessions, I noticed that the engineers would always place the bass drum mic right next to the head. The drummers would then play like crazy, but it would always sound like they were playing on cardboard boxes. I discovered that if you move the mic away from the drums the sound would have room to breathe, hence a bigger drum sound.

I kept exploring and expanding that approach, to the point that we were actually placing mics in hallways—which is how we got the sound on "When The Levee Breaks" [Led Zeppelin IV, *Atlantic, 1971*]. That was purely in the search for ambience and getting



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the best out of the drums. So it was always better for me to find an engineer who knew exactly what I was talking about. After a while I didn't have to argue because they *knew* that I knew what I was talking about.

GW: Speaking of [*Jimi Hendrix producer*] Eddie Kramer: Did you ever jam with Hendrix?

PAGE: No. And I never saw him play, either. Back in the late Sixties—this is a good story, actually—I went right from working with the Yardbirds to touring and recording with Zeppelin, and that kept me very busy. In the first two years of any band, you just work solidly; if you're going to make an impact, that's what you have to do. We were no different. In fact, we probably worked for three years straight. Anyway, every time I came back from tour and Hendrix was playing somewhere, I would always say to myself, "Oh, I'm just so exhausted, I'll see him next time." I just put it off and, of course, there ultimately never was a next time. I'm really, really upset with myself for never seeing him. I really wanted to hear him.

I heard his records, naturally, but it would've been a thrill to see how he worked things out on stage. That's quite another ballgame, as you know.

GW: Although your playing styles were different, you and Jimi were similar in that you both tried to create lush aural landscapes.

PAGE: Well, there were a lot of people going in that direction. Look at the Beatles. Here was a band that went from "Please Mr. Postman" to "I Am The Walrus" in a few short years.

GW: Why is it that recording these days seems bland in comparison to the stuff from back then?

PAGE: Well, you had no drum machines in those days. You had to play everything, so there were all these natural crescendos and great ambient sounds to work with.

GW: Led Zeppelin's first album was slammed by *Rolling Stone* magazine, which was very influential at the time. Did that affect your approach on the second album?

PAGE: Not at all. We knew what we had, and we kept improving all the time. Also, we were playing all the music live and people were responding to what we were doing. That's the ultimate test. It didn't really start bothering me until after the third album. After all we had accomplished the press was still calling us "a hype." So that's why the fourth album was untitled. It was a meaningless protest really, but we wanted to prove that people weren't buying us for the name. ●

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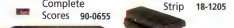

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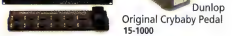

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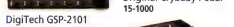

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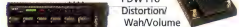

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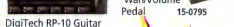

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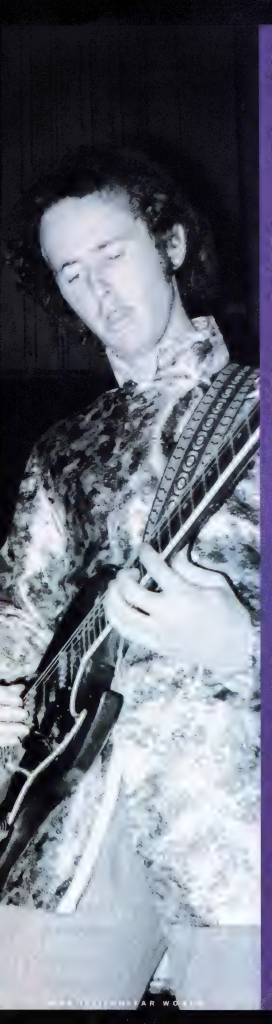
KRIEGER

ROBBY

"How could you possibly top 'The End'? What's left once you've fucked your mother and killed your father?"

BY ALAN PAUL

In this March, 1994 interview Robby Krieger looks back on the making of the six studio albums the Doors recorded with Jim Morrison.



THE DOORS (1967)

GUITAR WORLD: Your solo on "Light My Fire" is one of your shining moments as a guitarist. Did it bother you when the solo was edited out of the single version?

ROBBY KRIEGER: A little. We never wanted to cut it. But our first single, "Break On Through," flopped, and radio stations around the country told us that "Light My Fire" would be a hit if we edited it. We didn't have much choice. FM wasn't very big and to get on AM you had to have a short song.

GW: Do you have any particularly vivid memories from those recording sessions?

KRIEGER: Well, there's the famous story about recording "The End." Our engineer, Bruce Botnick, had brought in a TV to watch the World Series, and Jim (*Morrison*), who was on a lot of acid, got kind of pissed at that; baseball wasn't exactly conducive to setting the right mood for "The End." So he threw the damn television through the control room window. That got everyone's attention. *[laughs]*

I also remember Jim sitting at the table out in the snack-bar area muttering on and on, "Fuck the mother, kill the father. That's where it's at, man. Fuck the mother, kill the father." So we're going, "Yeah, right. Jim, but we've got to record. How about singing?" We finally got him into the studio for two takes, and we nailed it. We thanked God, because we knew we weren't going to have many shots because of Jim's state of mind.

STRANGE DAYS (1967)

GW: When the second album came out it was attacked by many critics as being a rehash of the first. Do you think that was valid criticism?

KRIEGER: Only on one count. I'll admit that "When The Music's Over" was similar to "The End" in length and structure, but so what? Something works, so you do it again. It's one of my favorite songs.

GW: I don't think that Manmoth's poetry up on "When The Music's Over" is quite as interesting as the one on "The End."

KRIEGER: No, it's not. How could you possibly top "The End"? What's left once you've fucked your mother and killed your father? *[laughs]* The reason it's my favorite song is my solo—I think it's my best.

GW: "People Are Strange" has a great chord progression. Did you write that?

KRIEGER: Yeah. Jim came up to my house in Laurel Canyon one night, and he was in one of his suicidal, downer moods. So John [*Densmore, drummer*] said, "Come on Jim, we'll go see the sunset. That'll get you out of this." We went up to the top of Laurel Canyon and it was incredibly beautiful—we were looking down on the sun reflecting off the top of the clouds. Jim had a total mood flip-flop and said, "Wow! Now I know why I felt like that. It's because if you're strange, *people* are strange." And he wrote the lyrics right there. Then I came up with the music and we went back down the hill.

GW: Were you guys around when Jim recorded "Horse Latitudes"?

KRIEGER: Yeah. He said he had a poem he wanted to read and that he wanted something real weird to back it. There were all these instruments in the studio from an orchestra session—harpsichords and pianos and timpani. We all started banging on them and fumbling around inside the pianos, and there were 10 or 12 people just screaming at the top of their lungs. After we laid that down, Jim overdubbed the poem.

The funny thing was, as we were listening back to it at full volume and Jim was reading, the guys from the Jefferson Airplane came straggling in—high as kites, of course. They stared at us like we were out of our minds, but we just acted casual and said, "Oh yeah, this is one of our songs." *[laughs]*

GW MARCH 1994

WAITING FOR THE SUN (1968)

GW: How bad was Jim's drinking as you were recording *Waiting For The Sun*?

KRIEGER: That was when the liquor really started being a problem. Before that, everything was more or less fine. LSD was no problem because it was a creative thing. There's nothing good about liquor—it just fucks you up—though at first it relaxes you, which is what you probably need after taking eight zillion acid trips. *[laughs]*

GW: What specific recollections do you have of these sessions?

KRIEGER: A lot of very horrible ones. By that time, Jim was being taken advantage of by various hangers-on. He would bring them to the studio and all these drunken assholes would be hanging around, fucking in the echo chamber and pissing in the closets. It was a mess.

THE SOFT PARADE (1969)

GW: During *The Soft Parade* tour, your Miami concert erupted in pandemonium and was canceled. Later, Jim was charged with indecent exposure. What do you remember of the concert?

KRIEGER: Well, first of all, Jim did *not* pull it out. But it was bedlam, just total craziness. The place was overcrowded, thousands of people swarmed the stage, and it collapsed. I remember Jim just rolling around in the midst of all those people and myself wondering if we would ever get out of there.

GW: But you had no sense that the incident was going to turn into such a big thing?

KRIEGER: No, hell no! Okay, the concert was fucked up, and we didn't finish, but nobody was angry, nobody asked for their money back. And the cops were friendly—they sat

around drinking beers with us after the show. Nothing happened until a week later, when somebody decided to make a stink about it. Some politician decided to make their career at our expense. Then it fucked everything up. We couldn't play anywhere for a year.

GW: Did Jim feel persecuted?

KRIEGER: I'm sure he did. But he wasn't surprised. We really had the sense that we had pushed the system to its edge and they were finally pushing back.

MORRISON HOTEL (1970)

GW: "Roadhouse Blues" and a couple of other songs on *Morrison Hotel* hinted at the bluesier, more bare-bones direction the Doors took a year later on *L.A. Woman*.

KRIEGER: I think it was a reaction to the overproduction of *The Soft Parade*. We wanted to get back to basics. "Roadhouse Blues" is one of my personal favorites. I was always proud of that song because, simple as it is, it's not just another blues. That one little lick makes it a song, and I think that sums up the genius of the Doors. I think that song stands up really well as an example of what made us a great band. And the session was really cool—one of my fondest memories of the band.

GW: Did Jim ever critique your playing?

KRIEGER: He would always tell me that I was the most underrated guitar player around. What's funny is that the four of us hardly ever criticized the others' playing—or even suggested anything. We worked so well together that we hardly ever had to talk about it. Everybody just played the right part in the right place at the right time.

L.A. WOMAN (1971)

GW: Legend has it that *L.A. Woman* was cut entirely live.

KRIEGER: Not entirely, but a lot of it was live, and the song "L.A. Woman" *was* completely live. I think that could be the quintessential Doors song, and the way we came up with it was amazing. We just started playing and it came together as if by magic. Jim made a lot of it up as he went along, which is amazing because I think it's one of his most poetic songs. I can remember Jim sitting in the bathroom with the mic singing and all of us just having a great time.

GW: "Cars Hiss By My Window" is a rather unusual blues.

KRIEGER: Yeah. That was our Jimmy Reed piece. Jim was really getting into the blues. I'd play straight blues and he'd sit there and make up songs on the spot. He just wanted to play all night. I really think that had we done another album it would have been a lot more straight blues stuff, which I always loved.

GW: Just weeks after the album entered the Top Ten, Jim was dead in Paris, France. How did you find out?

KRIEGER: I got a phone call. I didn't believe it because we used to hear shit like that all the time—that Jim jumped off a cliff or something. So we sent our manager over to Paris, and he called and said it was true.

GW: People often speak of the inevitability of his dying young. Do you buy that?

KRIEGER: No! I thought he would never die. I thought he'd outlive everybody, like one of those drunks who drink a fifth of whiskey a day and live until they're 80. He seemed invulnerable, the way he would do things like jump out of windows without getting hurt. I never saw those things, but I would hear about them the next day. For some reason, he was fairly well behaved around me. Somehow our relationship developed where he stayed fairly calm around me, thank God. [*laughs*] But he was definitely obsessed with death. He talked about it all the time.

GW: There's always been talk that he isn't really dead. Have you ever thought that?

KRIEGER: Yes and no. I've allowed myself to fantasize at times, but I'm sure that if he wasn't dead he would have gotten hold of us by now. Then again, if there's anybody who could pull something like that off, it was him. I still think about him quite a bit. I always have dreams that he's alive and we're playing together again. Wishful thinking. ●

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THE ALLMAN BROS. BAND

"I always knew that I'd play guitar all my life–but I never knew I could make a life out of it."–Dickey Betts

BY ALAN PAUL

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DANNY CLINCH

GUITAR WORLD: Dickey, I hear more and more young guitarists sounding like you; you're probably more influential today than you've been for 15 or 20 years.

DICKEY BETTS: It's an honor just to be able to stay in the rock business long enough to *become* an influence. And I'm just trying to somehow influence the people sitting in the first row. So influencing a musician, especially a professional musician, is probably the greatest honor that one could have.

GW: How has your audience evolved?

BETTS: Every year we have more and more young people at our shows. In 1989, when we did the reunion tour, it was mostly older fans. And every year since then there have been more and more younger and younger fans. What's really nice is it's the first time I can remember a situation where there's no generation gap. As a human being, you can have fun and be innocent no matter what your age. You're not makin' a fool out of yourself by having fun. So many people get to a certain age and suddenly think they have to be reserved all the time. Well, when you come to our show, it's your chance to get loose and have fun.

We've always tried to remain a band of the people in terms of the way we dress and the way we conduct ourselves. And that's worked out well for us. Now that we're middle-aged, we're actually very fortunate that we've never had to rely on sex appeal. We'd be in a lot of trouble now if that was the case. I'm 50 years old. I'm a good, strong man, but it would be ugly if I had to depend on gettin' out there in a pair of tights. [*laughs*] People come to hear you play, and for the feeling that they get from the band.

GW: Warren, Duane Allman was one of the greatest rock guitarists to ever live, and you're in the unenviable position of constantly being compared to him. Has that "replacing-a-legend" stigma been difficult for you to overcome?

WARREN HAYNES: I'm constantly drawing the line on how much I should sound like Duane. The band has made it easier by leaving it up to me to decide how much of Duane's influence to insert. They've always said, "Play like you. That's what we hired you to do." For the music to be true to itself, I have to insert a certain amount of Duane's sound—especially in the older songs—and the more I play that way the more it sounds like the Allman Brothers Band. That definitely makes it harder to be myself on guitar, but the more comfortable I am within the band, the more I'm able to stretch out, and the more my own style comes to the fore.

GW: Dickey, you and Duane are credited with introducing the idea of harmony playing to rock guitar. I've heard various stories about where your ideas for the arrangements came from. Was the primary influence jazz horns or Western swing fiddles?

BETTS: Both. I listened to a lot of country and string music—what's now called bluegrass—growing up. In fact, I played mandolin and ukulele and fiddle before I ever touched a guitar, which may be where a lot of the major keys I play in come from. But I also always loved jazz, and once the Allman Brothers Band was formed, Jaimoe [*drummer Jai Johanny Johanson*] really fired us up on jazz. He had us listening to Miles Davis and John Coltrane, and a lot of our guitar arrangement ideas came from the way their horns played together.

GW
JULY
1994

GW: Your shows run up to three-and-a-half hours. It must be difficult to play such lengthy, improvisatory sets. You can't hide up there.

BETTS: It's very difficult to try to play the same song differently every night. And if we *don't* do that, we feel like we've failed. I feel like hell if I go out there and I just don't have it. That usually happens if I didn't eat properly and I suddenly feel weak or tired. You have to take care of yourself on the road.

GW: Has Warren influenced your playing?

BETTS: I don't think I'd be nearly as good a guitar player today if I hadn't been working with Warren. Everybody thought I was crazy for wanting to get him in the band. All the business people said, "Are you sure you want him? He...you know...I mean—" They wouldn't quite say it, so I asked, "Are you afraid he's going to blow me away?" And they said, "Well, he's awfully good. Are you sure you want to deal with that?" And I said, "I don't want to get some fucking lackey in the band." If I had to have somebody in the band who I couldn't get anything out of, we might as well not have another guitarist. I have to work like hell to keep up with Warren, and he drives me to play things that I wouldn't otherwise. Hopefully, I do the same thing for him.

HAYNES: There's a healthy thing that goes on on stage where all seven of us are capable of kicking the others' asses at any given point, which makes all of us play better. And that's the way it should be.

GW: Dickey, did you and Duane have that type of relationship?

BETTS: Yes, we did. Duane used to tell me, "Man, you sure give me a hard fucking way to go. This was supposed to be *my* band when it started out." [*laughs*] We would laugh at each other and say, "Man, you don't give me a break." We really pushed each other, which has always been the essence of the band: to push each other while avoiding competition. If one guy is down, everyone else tries to carry him, not run him into the stage.

GW: Dickey, some of your greatest compositions are instrumentals, like "Jessica" and "In Memory Of Elizabeth Reed." Is the process of putting together a solo similar to the way you compose a whole instrumental song?

BETTS: Not at all. The instrumentals are very studied. It's called architecture, and for a good reason: it's much like designing a building. It's

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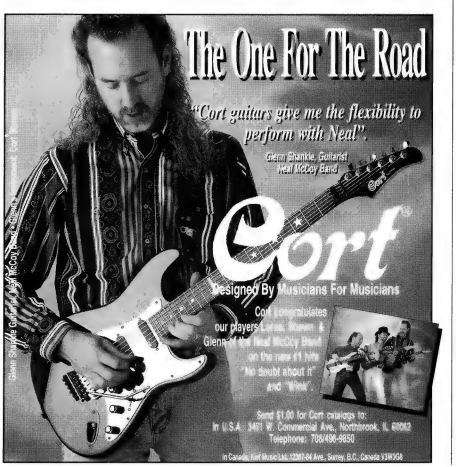
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meticulously constructed and every aspect has its place. It takes months to write a good instrumental. The solos, on the other hand, happen too fast to even think about. If I think about it, it's ruined. If I'm stuck or need a rest for a minute, I've got licks that I can hang there until I get my mind together, but it's mostly instantaneous and instinctive. It's like touching a hot stove; you don't think you're gonna jerk your hand back. You just do it.

GW: How do you go about "designing" your instrumentals?

BETTS: They usually begin with a feeling I want to express, but it's something that's very difficult to explain. Writing a good instrumental is very fulfilling because you've transcended language and spoken to someone with a melody. My instrumentals try to create some of the basic feelings of human interaction, like anger, joy and love.

GW: Can each of you put into words what playing the guitar has meant to you?

BETTS: I feel that my ability to play music is a gift. I don't take it for granted and I'm very grateful for it, but I always knew that this was what I wanted to do. When people asked what I was going to be when I grew up, even before I was in first grade, I would say, "I'm gonna be a guitar player on the radio." But along with that gift comes an obsessed kid who plays six hours a day. My 16-year-old son, Duane, is like that now; he watches TV, he's playing his guitar. He comes in to talk to me, he's playing his guitar. And I think that you have to do that in order to apply yourself and discover what talent you might have. The obsession is part of the talent.

HAYNES: I think most people that come this far share that. Before I could get a guitar in tune, I knew that [*playing*] was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. And it really *is* an obsession. We all go through phases where we play for hours upon hours every day and just don't want to put it down. You're never going to get there unless you apply yourself that way.

I always knew I was going to play guitar, whether I did it professionally or not. It's a release that I'm very grateful to have in my life. And even if, God forbid, I fixed computers for a living, I would still go home and play guitar. I always know that if I'm in a shitty mood I can pick up my guitar and feel better.

BETTS: I always knew that I'd play guitar all my life—but I never knew I could make a life out of it. And I never dreamed that we would be accepted the way we are. I mean, saying you knew you were going to be a guitar player is one thing, but being blessed with such a long career—we seem to have the longevity of an elephant—is something you could never anticipate. ●

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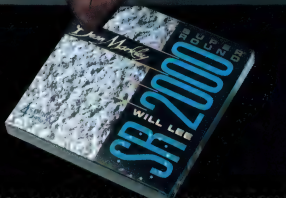

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Few blues players have had as profound an impact on rock guitarists as King. This two-CD collection, a fine overview of King's lengthy career, offers up reams of macho, aggressive overbending. Next stop, particularly for Stevie Ray Vaughan devotees: *Live Wire/Blues Power* (Stax).

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Live At The Regal (MCA)
Documents a legendary 1964 performance by a legendary artist. The King puts his great voice, sweet tone and signature vibrato to work on such staples as "It's My Own Fault," "Every Day I Have The Blues" and "Sweet Little Angel." A treasure trove of sophisticated yet down-home blues.

B.B. KING

The Best Of B.B. King, Vol. One (Flair/Virgin)
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MAGIC SAM

West Side Soul (Delmark)
The late Magic Sam Maghett fully lived up to his nickname on this 1968 album, casting an exuberant spell with his soaring vocals and rapid, clean-toned guitar lines. Highlights include the steamy solo on "I Don't Want No Woman" and the celestial r&b sizzler, "That's All I Need."

SON SEALS

Live And Burning (Alligator)
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STEVIE RAY VAUGHAN AND DOUBLE TROUBLE

In Step (Epic)
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JOE LOUIS WALKER

Blue Soul (Hightone)
The finest album by contemporary blues' finest guitarist. Includes grooving r&b ("Ain't Nothin' Going On"), biting acoustic slide ("I'll Get To Heaven On My Own") and crazed, overdriven slow blues ("City Of Angels").

T-BONE WALKER

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JOHNNY "GUITAR" WATSON

Three Hours Past Midnight (Flair/Virgin)
Extremely intense and wild, Watson was a major influence on Jimi Hendrix, among others. Sort of a more modern, extroverted Gatemouth Brown.

HOWLIN' WOLF

Moanin' In The Moonlight/Howlin' Wolf (Chess/MCA)
This one CD of Wolf's first two Chess albums includes all the hits, offering an excellent sampling of Hubert Sumlin's landmark guitar work. Sumlin echoed Wolf's vocals with an exceedingly dirty tone. Grunge to the max by the guitarist who influenced a generation of rockers.

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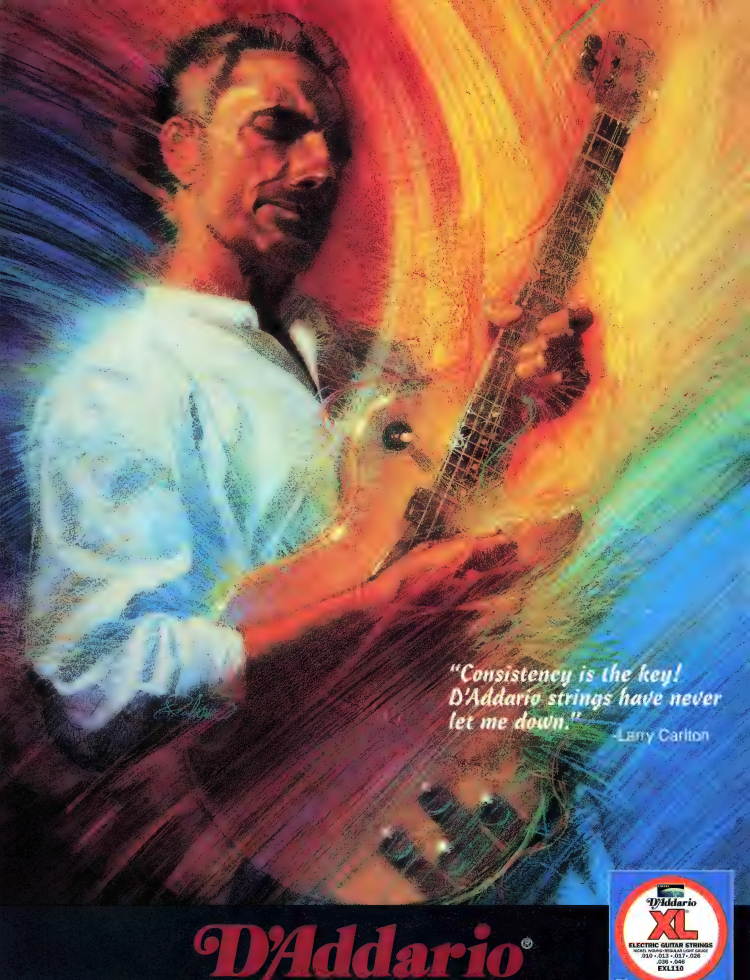

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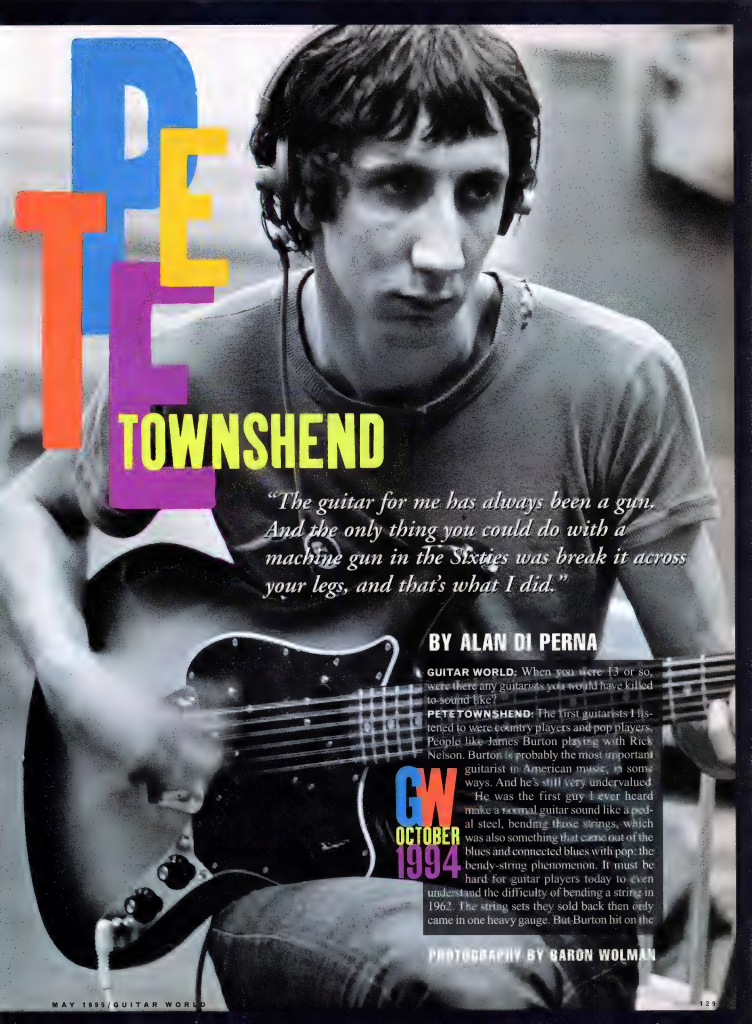

PETE TOWNSHEND

"The guitar for me has always been a gun. And the only thing you could do with a machine gun in the Sixties was break it across your legs, and that's what I did."

BY ALAN DI PERNA

GUITAR WORLD: When you were 13 or so, were there any guitarists you would have killed to sound like?

PETE TOWNSHEND: The first guitarists I listened to were country players and pop players. People like James Burton playing with Rick Nelson. Burton is probably the most important guitarist in American music, in some ways. And he's still very undervalued. He was the first guy I ever heard make a normal guitar sound like a pedal steel, bending those strings, which was also something that came out of the blues and connected blues with pop: the bendy-string phenomenon. It must be hard for guitar players today to even understand the difficulty of bending a string in 1962. The string sets they sold back then only came in one heavy gauge. But Burton hit on the

GW OCTOBER 1994

PHOTOGRAPHY BY BARON WOLMAN

idea of using two second strings instead of a second and a third, and that made bending much easier.

I also studied Chet Atkins, another country player, and I'm very good at reproducing his fingerpicking style. It might surprise people, but I can do all that stuff. Maybe not as well as what's-his-face [*Mark Knopfler*] from Dire Straits, but I can play it.

GW: Did you listen to any jazz or blues players?

TOWNSHEND: I listened to Wes Montgomery, Barney Kessel and Johnny Smith a little bit—the guitar players of my father's music era, really. [*Pete's father, Cliff, was a successful dance band saxophonist in Britain.*] That kind of stylish lounge-jazz guitar playing. I suppose Wes Montgomery was the top gun. There's a certain lyricism to what he did that I try and shoot for in my solos. And then later, when I got into the blues, I started listening to guitar playing in a different way. I loved John Lee Hooker for the visceral style of his early electric recordings. And then there was a whole rush of other guitar players. Jazz players like Kenny Burrell, who played with [*organist*] Jimmy Smith. And, going back to Kenny Burrell's influences, people like Charlie Christian.

But I wasn't really a guitar purist. To me, the guitar was always a second instrument, bizarrely enough. I wanted to be like my father—a saxophone player. And when I couldn't get a note out of a reed, he suggested I try what was then his second instrument, guitar. So I always felt like I was playing a second instrument, a not-very-important instrument, but one that had been appropriated by rock and roll because it was sexy and by the blues because it was cheap.

I've got two strains to me. One side is the pure music-lover/musicologist/afficionado of music, which grew out of my life with my father, who was a superb musician and very highly valued in his own business. But there's another side of me that got into the idea of rock and roll—its socio-political function, if you will, more than its musical content. So the guitar for me has always been a gun. And the only thing you could do with a machine gun in the Sixties was break it across your legs, and that's what I did. As an acoustic player I do, in a sense, sometimes sit down and try to use the guitar as an instrument of love and communication. But even the way I play acoustic is very aggressively rhythmic. My best work is rhythmic and machine-gunny.

GW: What's the real story of the guitar solo on "I Can't Explain"? It's sometimes attributed to Jimmy Page. Other reports have it that you and Page both cut very similar-sounding solos, and no one is sure which one made it to the final mix.

TOWNSHEND: The solo? No, the solo's me. Jimmy doesn't play like that.

GW: Thank you. You know, there are those who still insist it's Page.

TOWNSHEND: Jimmy was there at the session to play lead guitar, but no, he didn't do the solo. There was a [*session*] drummer there, too; I can't remember his name. Keith Moon just threw the guy's drums out the door. But Jimmy was a friend of mine. We'd had a mutual girlfriend. She'd been going out with Jimmy before and was still, you know...kinda hooked on him—for a little longer than I was comfortable with. Anyway, she was much older than us. We were 19 or 20 and she was about 30. And a fucking sexy woman! She'd obviously

Continued on page 188

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15 YEARS 15 LICKS

BY ANDY ALEDORT

In the last decade and a half, we guitarists have witnessed incredible changes in the ever-mutating world of confusion we call rock and roll. Back in 1980, when Guitar World first appeared on the newsstands, the rebirth of heavy metal—in the form of groups like Van Halen, AC/DC and a few others—heralded the return to prominence of the guitar. By 1982, the pyrotechnic brilliance of Eddie Van Halen and neo-classical pioneer Randy Rhoads had spawned hundreds of thousands of guitar-crazed disciples, all willing to devote every waking moment to the rock guitar *mission*.

Beyond this insular world of what would soon-be-coined "shredders," loud, distorted guitar had made inroads into the upper echelons of the pop charts. Mega-platinum acts like Journey, Toto, Def Leppard and Quiet Riot scored big (giving birth to that new hybrid, "pop metal"), as did guitar-driven rockabilly revivalists the Stray Cats. By the mid-Eighties, heavy rock acts like Bon Jovi and Whitesnake ruled the airwaves. Add to the blend the blues-injected sounds of ZZ Top and blues/rock virtuoso Stevie Ray Vaughan, and guitarists had more than their share of new and challenging six-string sounds to embrace.

Concurrently, another revolution was taking place in the realm of music publishing. In the early Eighties, the modern guitar transcription was born, and for the first time, guitarists could walk into a music store and come away with correctly transcribed versions of all of their favorite songs.

Below are featured (in no specific order) fifteen "essential" licks, each selected to represent a specific trend, style or technical breakthrough in guitar playing over the last 15 years. Of course, so small a collection cannot absolutely reflect every significant development—or every guitarist—in what has been a wonderfully varied and fruitful decade and a half of guitar music. Yet the selections, in their totality, should provide you with a solid sense of where rock guitar has been since the day Guitar World was born.

1) "Come As You Are"—Nirvana (**FIGURE 1**) From *Nevermind* (Geffen, 1991)

Nirvana were one of the most influential bands of the Nineties. They started the alterna-

FIGURE 1 Nirvana "Come As You Are"
Tune down one whole-step (low to high: D, G, C, F, A, D)
Intro ♩= 120

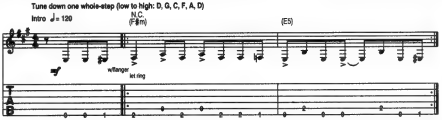



FIGURE 2A Van Halen "Panama"
Tune down 1/2 step (low to high: Eb, Ab, Db, Gb, Bb, Eb)
Intro ♩= 144

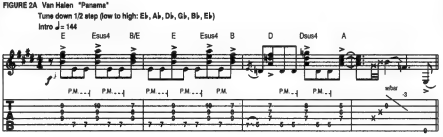



FIGURE 2B bars 17 - 20

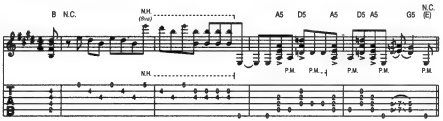



FIGURE 3 Stevie Ray Vaughan "Pride And Joy"
Tune down 1/2 step (low to high: Eb, Ab, Db, Gb, Bb, Eb)
Intro ♩= 126
Triplet Feel

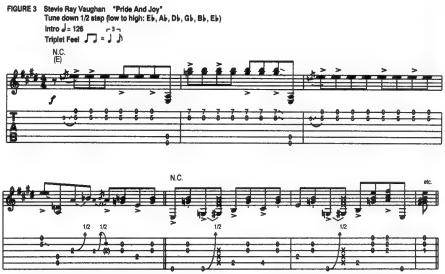


FIGURE 4 Metallica "Master Of Puppets"
Intro ♩= 220

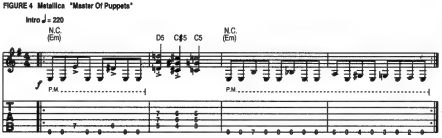
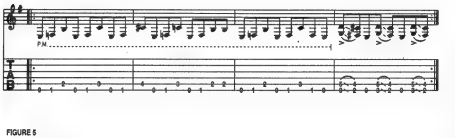


FIGURE 5
5-string Telecaster (6th string removed) In Open G Tuning (low to high: G, D, G, B, D)

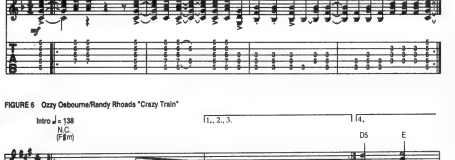


FIGURE 6 **Ozzy Osbourne/Randy Rhoads "Crazy Train"**

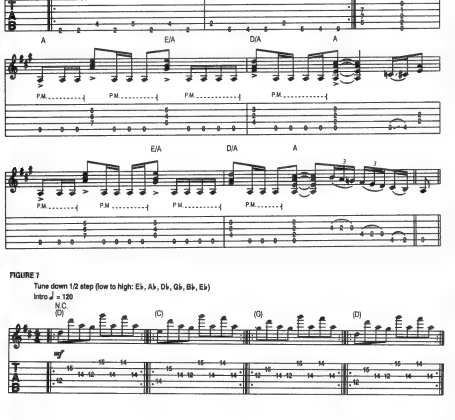
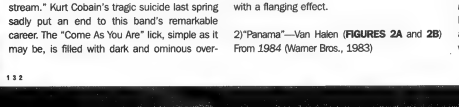



FIGURE 7
Tune down 1/2 step (low to high: Eb, Ab, Db, Gb, Bb, Eb)



tive revolution that has by now elevated that style of music to what we think of as "mainstream." Kurt Cobain's tragic suicide last spring sadly put an end to this band's remarkable career. The "Come As You Are" lick, simple as it may be, is filled with dark and ominous overtones, especially played as Kurt played it, on a guitar tuned down one whole step and treated with a flanging effect.

2)"Panama"—Van Halen (**FIGURES 2A** and **2B**) From *1984* (Warner Bros., 1983)

Eddie Van Halen is responsible for legions of guitarists picking up single-pickup solid-body guitars and playing as fast as they could, usually with both hands dancing all over the fretboard. *1984* contained many killer tracks—"Jump," "Hot For Teacher," "I'll Wait"—but the "Panama" opening lick remains one of the most exciting (and fun to play) intros Eddie has ever devised. **FIGURE 2A** illustrates the first four bars, over which Eddie plays shifting three-note chords over E and D pedal tones. **FIGURE 2B** illustrates bars 17-20, in which he restates the single-note lick of the first bar with natural harmonics of the second bar, followed up with aggressive power chording in the great Van Halen tradition.

3)"Pride And Joy"—Stevie Ray Vaughan (**FIGURE 3**) From *Texas Flood* (Epic, 1983)

Stevie Ray was without question the preeminent blues guitarist of his generation. Just as Van Halen caused many guitarists to rethink their approach to the instrument in the late Seventies, SRV astounded many with his consummate articulation, fierce intensity and monstrous tone. "Pride And Joy" is one of Stevie's most enduring compositions, and is immediately recognizable by the first few notes of the intro (use upstrokes for all but the last eighth note in bars 1 and 2, and for all of the notes in bar 3).

4)"Master Of Puppets"—Metallica (**FIGURE 4**) From *Master Of Puppets* (Elektra, 1986)

Back in 1986, thrash was still in diapers. Metallica had released two albums—*Kill 'Em All* and *Ride The Lightning*—and had a rabid following in and around their Bay Area home turf, but the band had yet to break big. *Master Of Puppets* was the beginning of the future of Metallica. "Master Of Puppets" captures the band at its original best, and clearly illustrates the potent combination of brutally heavy riffs and pure speed that is Metallica.

5) "Start Me Up"—The Rolling Stones. From *Tattoo You* (Rolling Stones Records, 1981)

This track exemplifies the Stones' sound, just as well as such time-honored classics as "Sympathy For The Devil" or "Jumping Jack Flash" do. Keith's signature five-string open G tuning (low to high: G, D, G, B, D) fuels this immediately recognizable riff, similar to **FIGURE 5**. This lick illustrates a technique used by Keith in many of his greatest riffs from such songs as "19th Nervous Breakdown," and "Brown Sugar": The index finger is barred across all of the strings (sounding a major chord in this tuning), and Keith subsequently adds the middle and/or ring fingers to the B and D strings, respectively.

6) "Crazy Train"—Ozzy Osbourne with Randy Rhoads (**FIGURE 6**) From *Blizzard Of Ozz* (Jet Records, 1981)

Though this thunderous opening lick is as old as the Stones' "Start Me Up," it still sounds new, exciting and *heavy*. Randy Rhoads' groundbreaking guitar work with Ozzy on *Blizzard* and *Diary Of A Madman* grabbed everyone's hearts and ears with his incendiary songwriting and soloing abilities, and almost single-handedly built the framework upon which neo-classical metal was built. "Crazy Train"

opens with an ominous lick based on F# Aeolian and then moves up to the relative major key of A. The rhythm part in A, based on an open A string pedal played against shifting A, E and D triads, is also used for the verse sections of the tune.

7) "Sweet Child O' Mine"—Guns N' Roses). From *Appetite For Destruction* (Geffen, 1986)

Slash, Guns N' Roses' guitarist extraordinaire, has often referred to this immediately recognizable riff as "one of the dumbest things I've ever heard...When we first played the song, I thought it was a joke." Dumb it may have been, but "Sweet Child O' Mine" went on to sweep the airwaves, in the process helping to launch the Gunners into the stratosphere of rock notoriety. This lick, based on the D major scale (D, E, F#, G, A, B, C#), is played entirely in the 12th position with the index, middle and ring fingers, not unlike the riff shown in **FIGURE 7**.

8)"Every Breath You Take"—The Police (**FIGURE 8**) From *Synchronicity* (A&M, 1983)

Policeman Andy Summers established a name for himself from the get-go by consistently inventing unique rhythm guitar parts. No one had previously combined such disparate sounds as reggae, hard rock and jazz harmony into basic pop song structures.

"Every Breath You Take" features an extended hand position for the first two intro (and verse) chords (Aadd2 & F#madd2) As the index finger frets the root notes on the 6th string, the middle finger frets the 5ths on the 5th string, and the pinky frets the 9ths on the 4th string (a similar chord shape is used in appears on "Message In A Bottle"). The index finger is then lifted off the 6th string and moved to fret 3rds on the 3rd string. Similar shapes are used for the subsequent D(sus2) and E(sus2) chords.

9)"Even Flow"—Pearl Jam (**FIGURE 9**). From *Ten* (Epic, 1991).

Along with their MTV staples "Alive" and "Jeremy," Pearl Jam's "Even Flow" set the tone for rock's new direction, programmed in Seattle. Stone Gossard played this lick on a guitar tuned to open D (low to high: D, A, D, F#, A, D), but the lick is arranged here for "dropped D" tuning (low to high: D, A, D, G, B, E).

10)"Sharp Dressed Man"—ZZ Top. From *Eliminator* (Warner Bros., 1983)

Along with "Gimme All Your Lovin," "Sharp Dressed Man" established ZZ Top as one of the biggest rock bands in the country. In line with other Top classics such as "La Grange" and "Cheap Sunglasses," "Sharp Dressed Man" is fueled by a very simple two-note lick (fourths apart), based on the C minor-pentatonic scale (C, Eb, F, G, Bb). **FIGURE 10** depicts a similar riff.

11) "Back In Black"—AC/DC (**FIGURE 11**) From 1980 *Back In Black* (Atlantic, 1980)

In the wake of Led Zeppelin's demise, the huge success of *Back In Black* heralded the rebirth of British metal. The "Back In Black" opening riff puts into a nutshell the band's bare-boned, but highly effective, approach to hard rock.

12) "The One I Love"—R.E.M. (**FIGURE 12**) From the 1987 album *Document* (I.R.S. Records)

Back before people used the word "alternative," R.E.M. was an alternative band. 1987's "The One I Love" marked the beginning of R.E.M.'s ascent to superstardom, and is based on a very simple lick that goes across the Em to D chord change. Another "I can name that tune in three notes" rock standard.

FIGURE 8 The Police "Every Breath You Take"

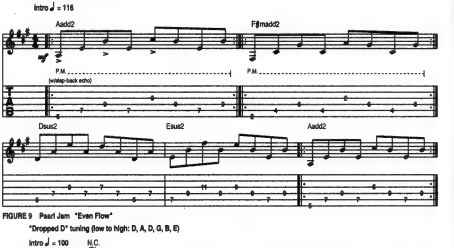


FIGURE 9 Pearl Jam "Even Flow"
"Dropped D" tuning (low to high: D, A, D, G, B, E)

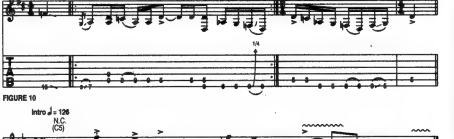



FIGURE 10

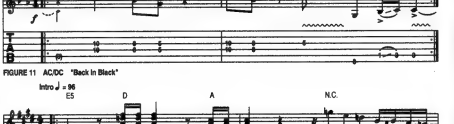
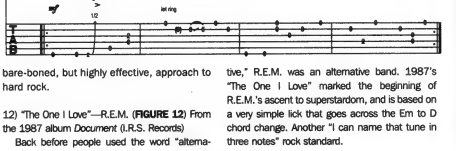



FIGURE 11 AC/DC "Back In Black"

FIGURE 12 REM "The One I Love"



13) "Pride (In The Name Of Love)"—U2 (**FIGURE**

From the *The Unforgettable Fire* (Island, 1984)

"Pride (In The Name Of Love)," dedicated to Reverend Martin Luther King, was U2's first big hit in the U.S. Their next album, 1987's *The Joshua Tree*, pushed the band over the top; by '88, they were the biggest band in the world. This song's opening lick (which kicks in approximately 16 seconds into the song) is comprised of a series of shifting double-stops that barely allude to chord changes. The de facto chord changes are laid down by the bass. The riff however, is played in insistent 16th notes, driving the militaristic feel of the song along; it also features the use of ambient and slap-back delays, which serve to give the guitar part a "dreamier" quality.

14) "Satch Boogie"—Joe Satriani (**FIGURE 14**)

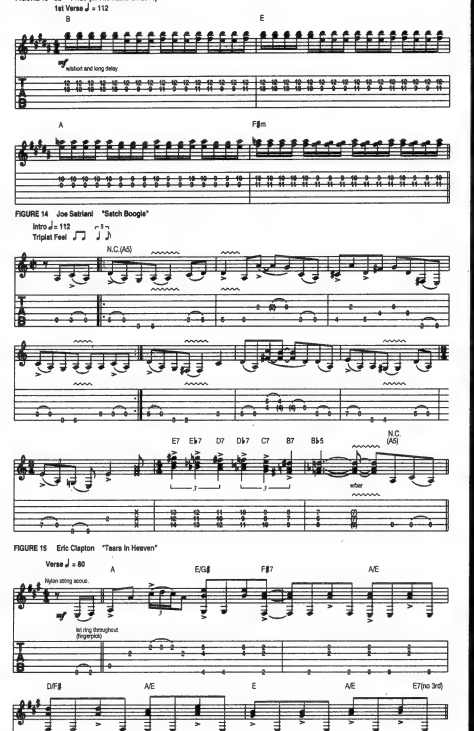
From *Surfing With The Alien* (Relativity, 1987)

On the heels of the technical masterworks of Ulrich Roth, Michael Schenker, Yngwie Malmsteen, George Lynch and former pupil Steve Vai, Joe Satriani blasted out of obscurity with 1987's red hot *Surfing With The Alien*. Satriani far outshone his predecessors in terms of popular acceptance. "Satch Boogie" and the title cut made this a must-have record for guitar enthusiasts in the Eighties. The opening signature lick is based on the A minor-pentatonic scale (A, C, D, E, G), with abundant use of open strings. Of note also is Satriani's huge tone; the thick distortion aids in the production of artificial "pinch" harmonics and adds gobs of sustain.

15) "Tears In Heaven"—Eric Clapton (**FIGURE 15**).

From *Rush (Music From The Motion Picture Soundtrack)* (Reprise, 1991)

Any group of important licks of the last fifteen years without some contribution by Eric Clapton, one of rock's most consistently successful musicians, would be incomplete. This beautiful ballad was written by Eric in memory of his son, Conor, who had died in a tragic accident. A live version of the song was included on the immensely successful *Unplugged* album and, the second time around, the song became a huge hit. Eric fingerpicks the tune on a nylon-string acoustic guitar, allowing all of the notes to ring throughout. Bass notes are picked with the thumb, and the two-note chord voicings are plucked with the index and middle fingers. ●



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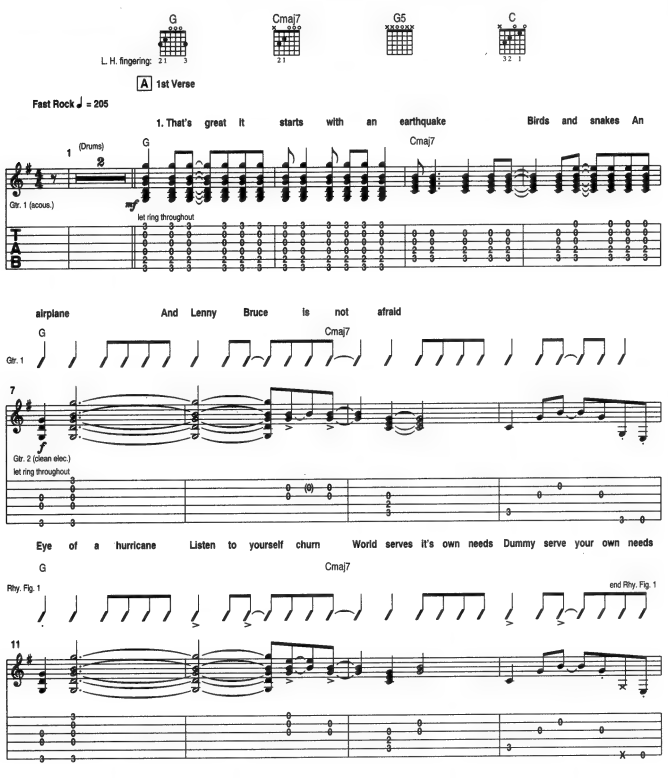
G
Cmaj7
G5
C
L. H. fingering: 2 1 3
2 1
3 2 1
A 1st Verse
Fast Rock ♩ = 205
1. That's great It starts with an earthquake Birds and snakes An
(Drums)
Gtr. 1 (acous.)
let ring throughout
airplane And Lenny Bruce is not afraid
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2 (clean elec.)
let ring throughout
Eye of a hurricane Listen to yourself churn World serves it's own needs Dummy serve your own needs
Rhy. Fig. 1
end Rhy. Fig. 1

From R.E.M.'s IRS recording *Document*

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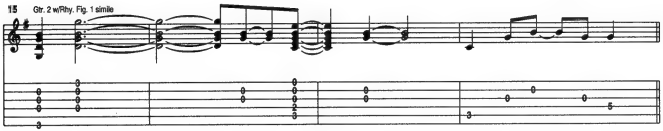
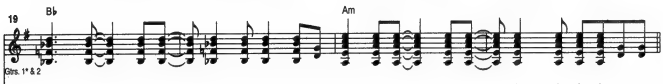
Speed it up a notch Speak grunt No street The ladder starts to clatter with fear Fight Down High

G Cmaj7

15 Gtr. 2 w/Rhy. Fig. 1 simile

B 1st Pre-chorus

wire in a fire represented seven games and a government for hire in a combat site

B♭ Am

19

Gtrs. 1* & 2

* Gtr. 1 doubles Gtr. 2 simile unless otherwise indicated

Rhy. Fig. 2 end Rhy. Fig. 2

Gtr. 3** (clean elec.)

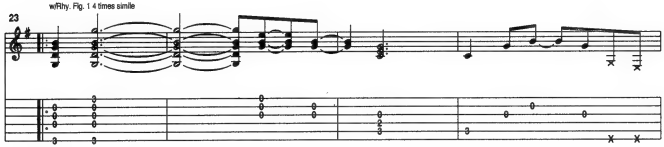
** doubled by Gtr. 4

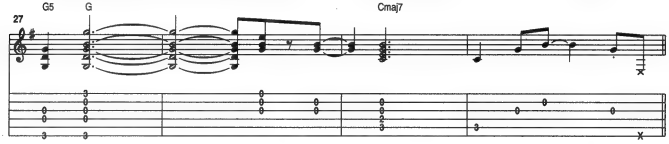
C 2nd & 3rd Verses

2. Nectar West a coming in a hurry with the furies breathin' down your neck
3. Six o'clock tv hour Don't get caught in foreign power Slash and burn return Listen to yourself churn

G Cmaj7

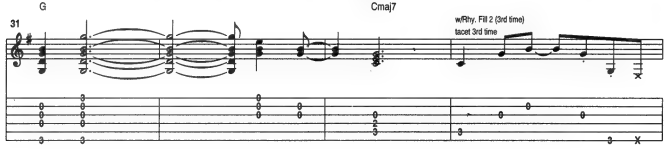
w/Rhy. Fill 1
w/Rhy. Fig. 1 4 times simile

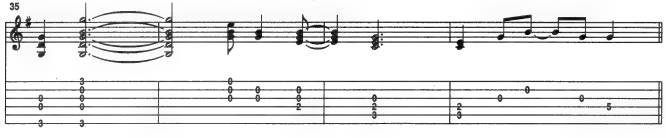
23

Team by team reporters Donald Trump Jenny Krupp Look at that low plane Fine then
Lock him in uniform and book-burning bloodletting Every motive escalate Auto mode incinerate



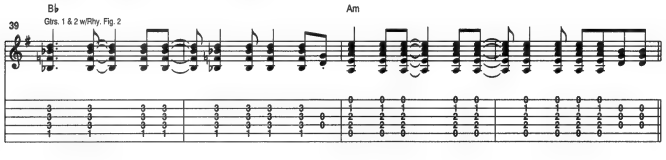
D 4th Verse

(2.) Uh oh Overflow Population Common proof A little deuce Save yourself Serve yourself World serves it's
(3.) Light a candle light a motor Step down Step down Watch a heel crush crush Uh oh this means
(4.) other night I tripped in Oz Continental trip divide Mountains sit in a line Leonard Bernstein



own needs Listen to your heart beat Dummy with the rapture and the reverend and the right Right Youth
no fear Cavalier Renegade Steer clear Turn 'em in and turn 'em in and turn 'em in oblige
Leonid Breshnev Lenny Bruce and Lester Bangs Birthday party Cheesecake Jelly bean Boom Youth

E 2nd, 3rd and 4th Pre-choruses

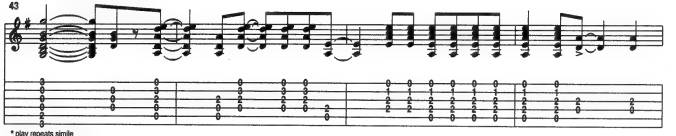
Patriotic Patriotic Slam fight right might Feelin' pretty psyched
Offer me solutions Offer me alternatives and I decline } It's the
Symbiotic Patriotic slam the net Right Right



F 1st, 2nd and 4th Choruses*

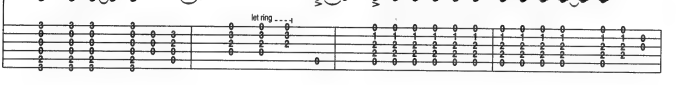
end of the world as we know it It's the
** (Time I had some time alone)
G Dsus2 Am D5

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fill 3 2nd time
Gtrs. 1 & 3 play Rhy. Fill 3 3rd time

43

* play repeats simile
** no background vocals first time

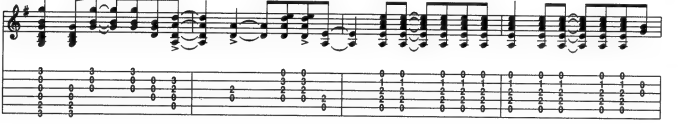
end of the world as we know it It's the
(Time I had some time alone)
G D5 Dsus2 N.C. Am

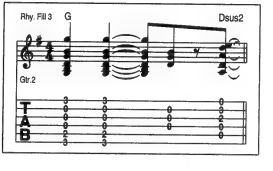
47

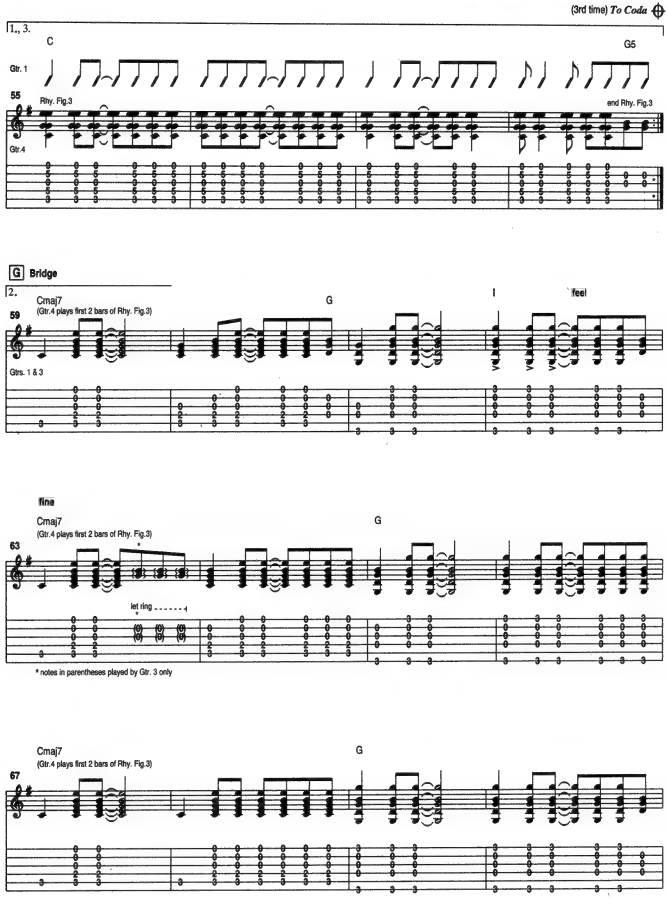


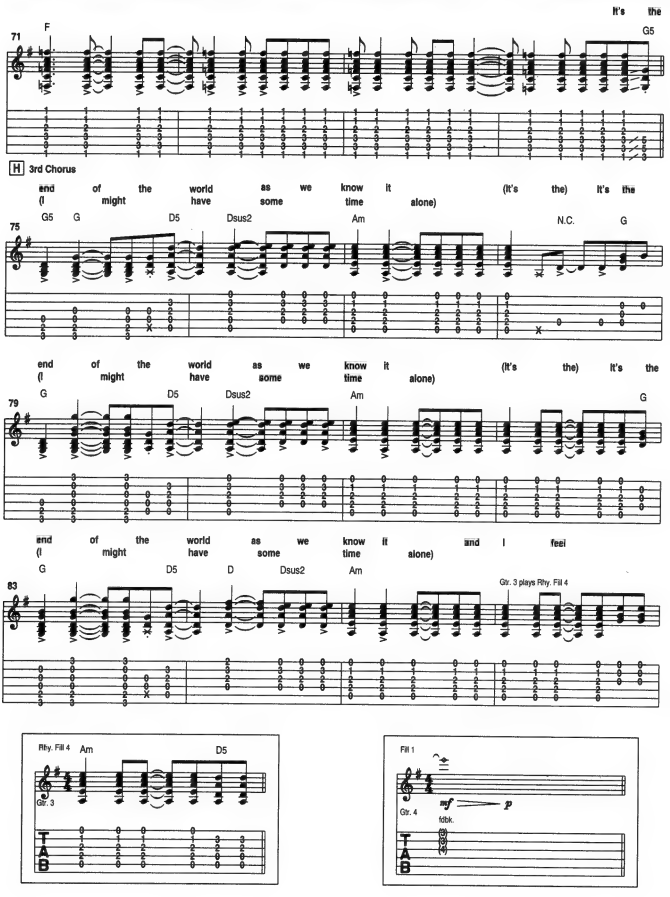
end of the world as we know it and I feel fine
(Time I had some time alone)
G D5 Dsus2 A5 Am

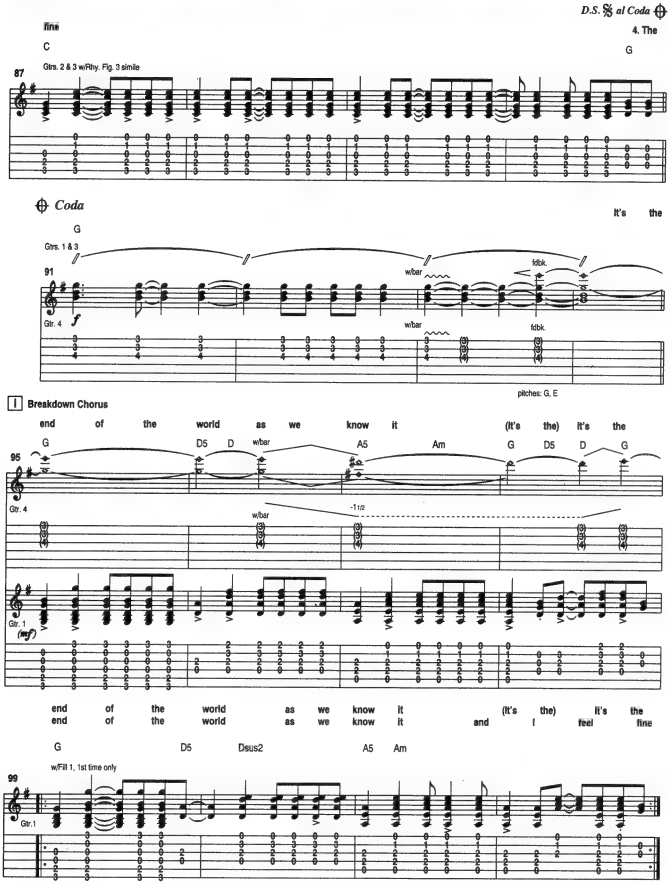
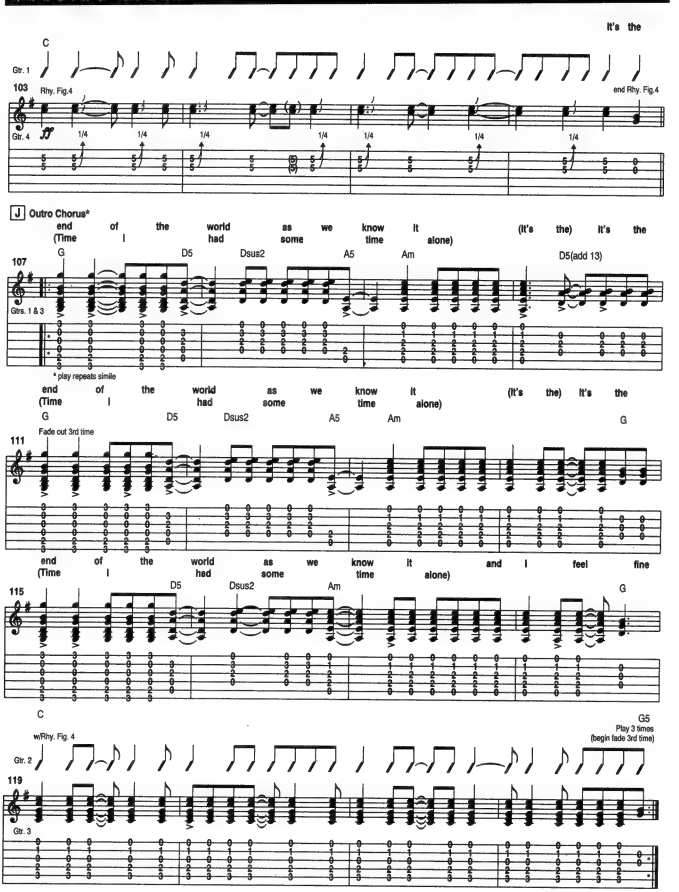
51






(3rd time) To Coda
1., 3.
C
G5
Gtr. 1
55
Rhy. Fig.3
end Rhy. Fig.3
Gtr. 4
G Bridge
2.
Cmaj7
(Gtr. 4 plays first 2 bars of Rhy. Fig.3)
G
59
feel
Gtrs. 1 & 3
fine
Cmaj7
(Gtr. 4 plays first 2 bars of Rhy. Fig.3)
G
63
let ring
* notes in parentheses played by Gtr. 3 only
Cmaj7
(Gtr. 4 plays first 2 bars of Rhy. Fig.3)
G
67


It's the
F
G5
71
H 3rd Chorus
end of the world as we know it (It's the) It's the
(I might have some time alone)
G5 G D5 Dsus2 Am N.C. G
75
end of the world as we know it (It's the) It's the
(I might have some time alone)
G D5 Dsus2 Am G
79
end of the world as we know it and I feel
(I might have some time alone)
G D5 D Dsus2 Am
83
Gtr. 3 plays Rhy. Fill 4
Rhy. Fill 4
Am D5
Gtr. 3
Fill 1
Gtr. 4
mf p
fdbk.


fine
D.S. 𝄋 al Coda
4. The
C
G
Gtrs. 2 & 3 w/Rhy. Fig. 3 simile
87
Coda
It's the
G
Gtrs. 1 & 3
91
w/bar
fdbk.
Gtr. 4
f
pitches: G, E
I Breakdown Chorus
end of the world as we know it (It's the) It's the
G D5 D w/bar A5 Am G D5 D G
95
Gtr. 4
-1½
Gtr. 1
(mf)
end of the world as we know it (It's the) It's the
end of the world as we know it and I feel fine
G D5 Dsus2 A5 Am
w/Fill 1, 1st time only
99
Gtr. 1

It's the
C
Gtr. 1
103
Rhy. Fig.4
end Rhy. Fig.4
Gtr. 4
1/4
Outro Chorus*
end of the world as we know it (It's the) It's the
(Time I had some time alone)
G D5 Dsus2 A5 Am D5(add 13)
107
Gtrs. 1 & 3
* play repeats simile
end of the world as we know it (It's the) It's the
(Time I had some time alone)
G D5 Dsus2 A5 Am G
Fade out 3rd time
111
end of the world as we know it and I feel fine
(Time I had some time alone)
D5 Dsus2 Am G
115
C
G5
Play 3 times
(begin fade 3rd time)
w/Rhy. Fig. 4
Gtr. 2
119
Gtr. 3

"It's The End Of The World As We Know It (And I Feel Fine)" (bassline)

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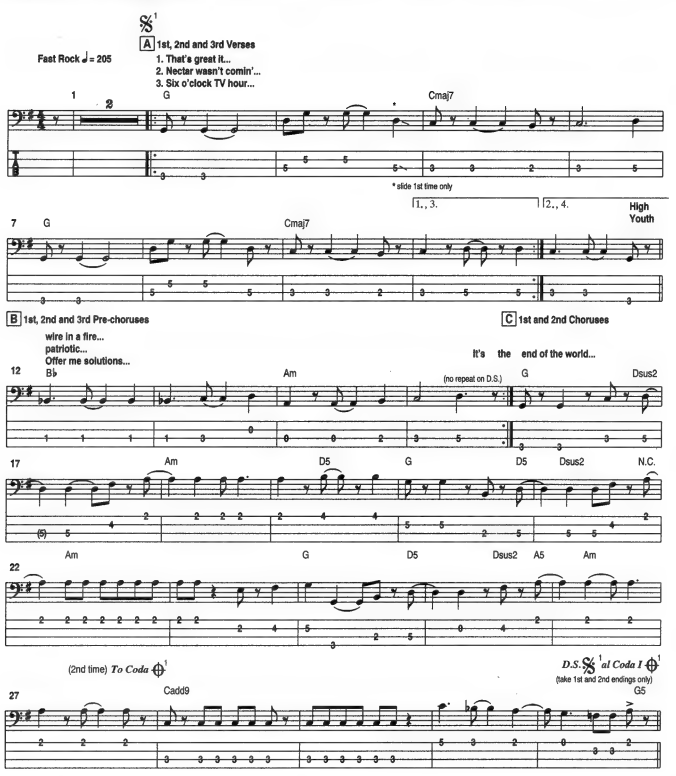
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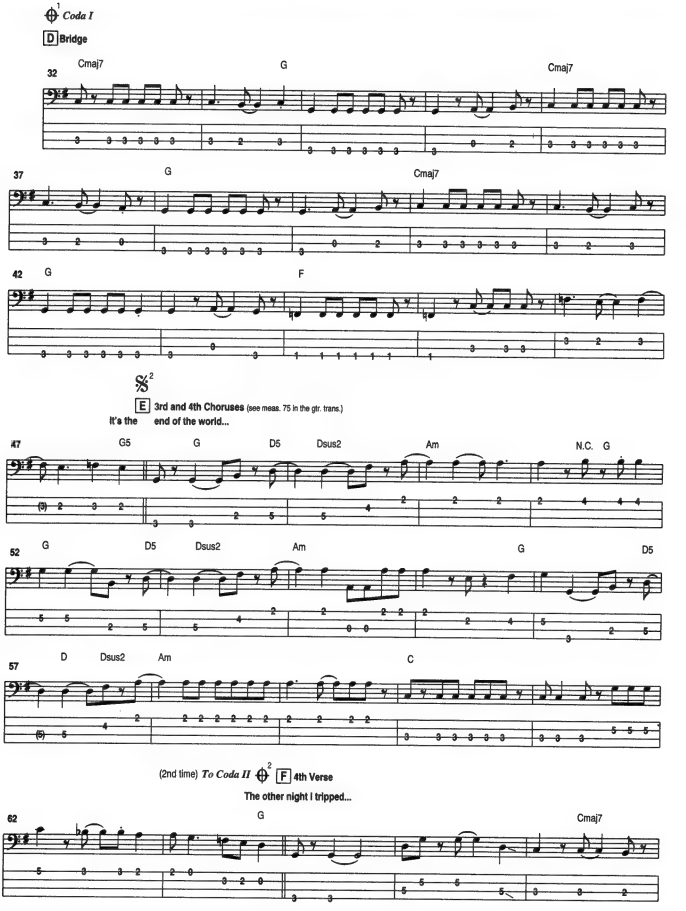
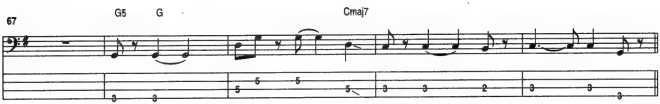
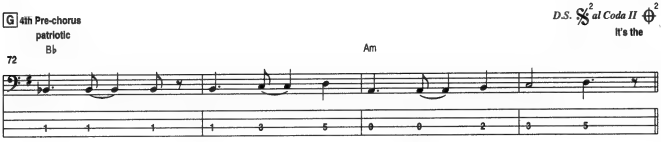
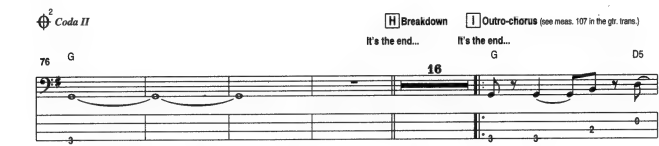
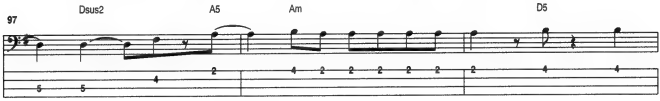
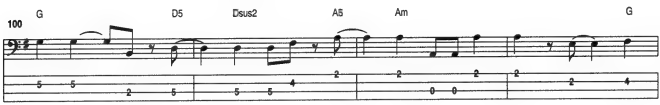
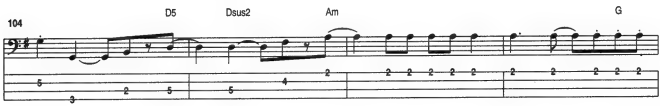
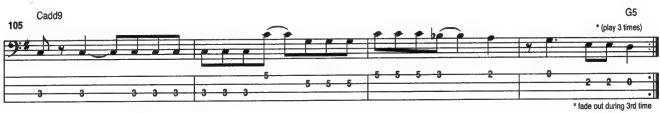

1 Coda I
D Bridge
32
Cmaj7
G
Cmaj7
37
G
Cmaj7
42
G
F
2
E 3rd and 4th Choruses (see meas. 75 in the gtr. trans.)
It's the end of the world...
47
G5
G
D5
Dsus2
Am
N.C.
G
52
G
D5
Dsus2
Am
G
D5
57
D
Dsus2
Am
C
(2nd time) To Coda II
2
F 4th Verse
The other night I tripped...
62
G
Cmaj7

67
G5
G
Cmaj7

G 4th Pre-chorus
patriotic
B♭
Am
72
D.S. 𝄋 al Coda II
It's the

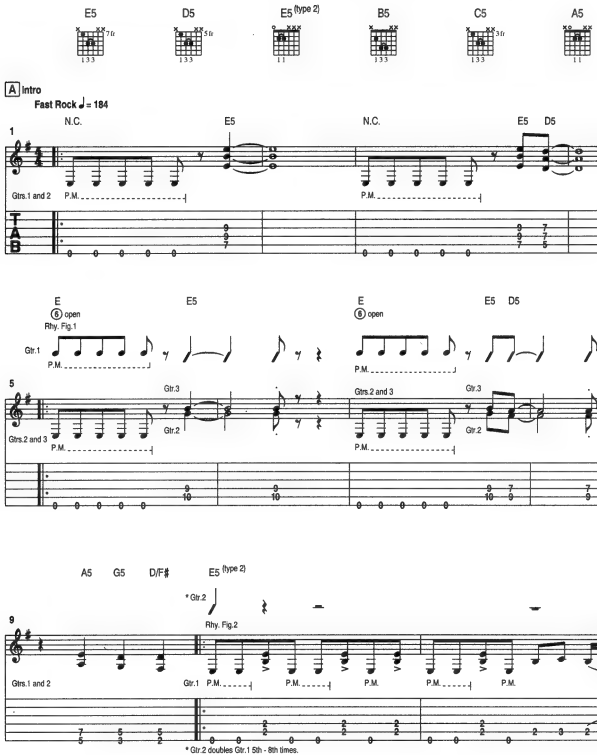

Coda II
H Breakdown
I Outro-chorus (see meas. 107 in the gtr. trans.)
It's the end...
It's the end...
76
G
16
G
D5


97
Dsus2
A5
Am
D5

100
G
D5
Dsus2
A5
Am
G

104
D5
Dsus2
Am
G

105
Cadd9
G5
* (play 3 times)
* fade out during 3rd time

"Creeping Death"

WORDS AND MUSIC BY JAMES HETFIELD, LARS ULRICH, CLIFF BURTON AND KIRK HAMMETT

TRANSCRIBED BY CARL CULPEPPER



From Metallica's Elektra recording *Ride The Lightning*

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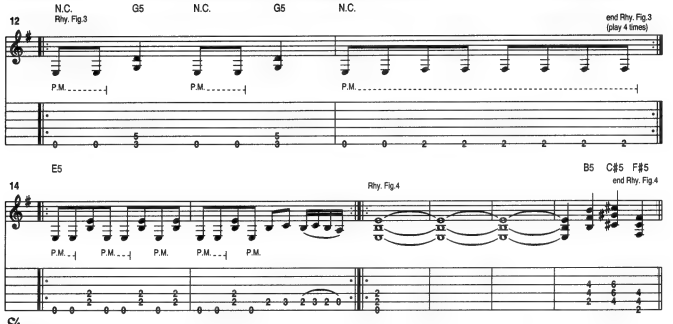

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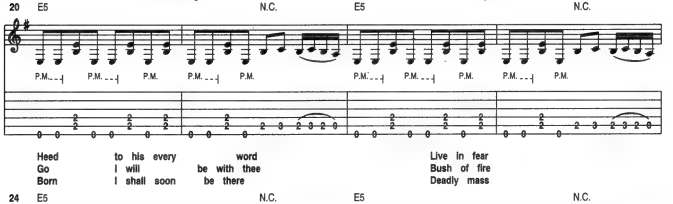
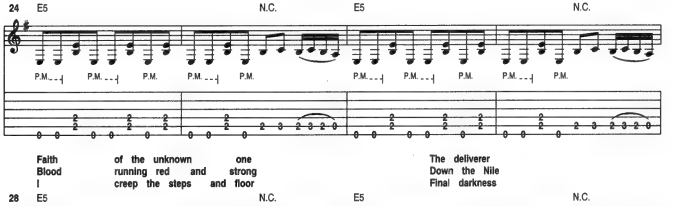
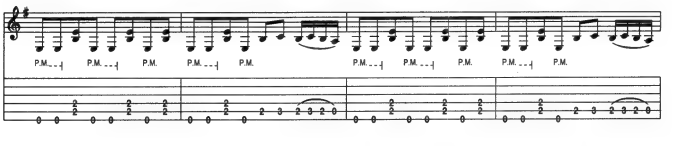
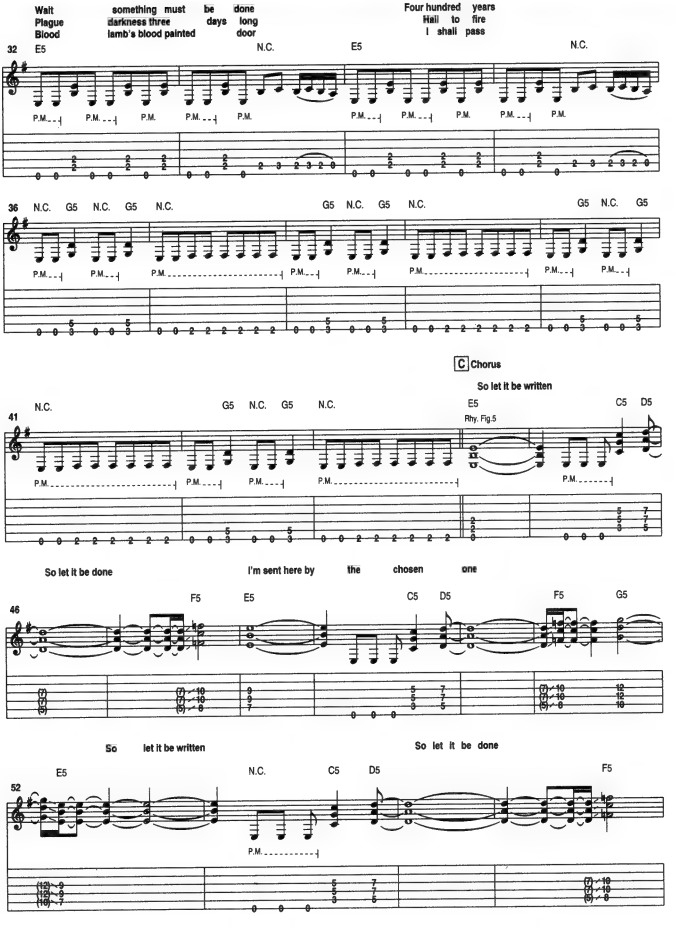
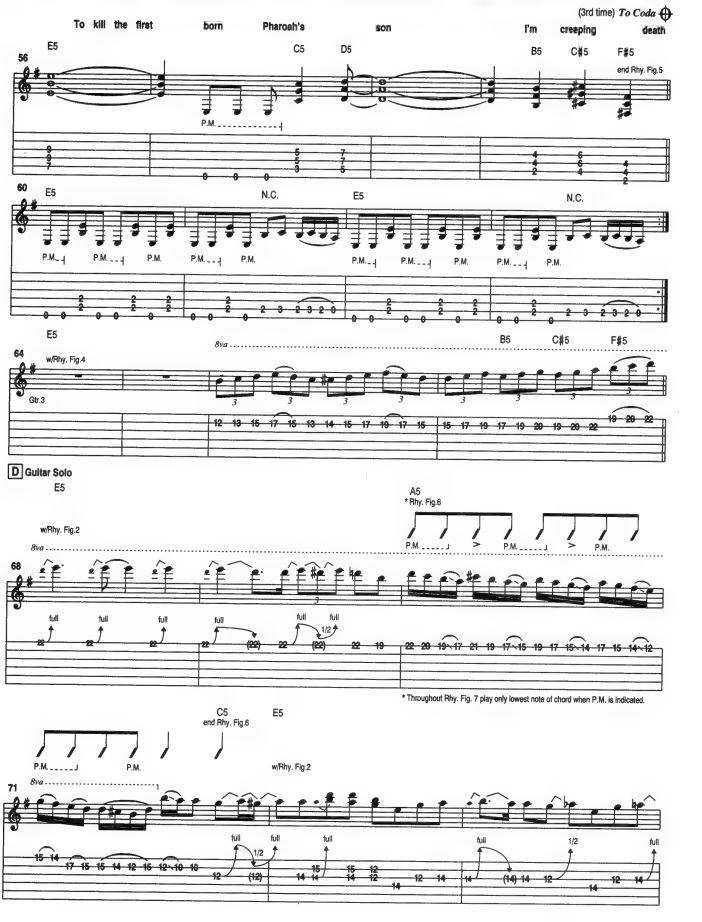
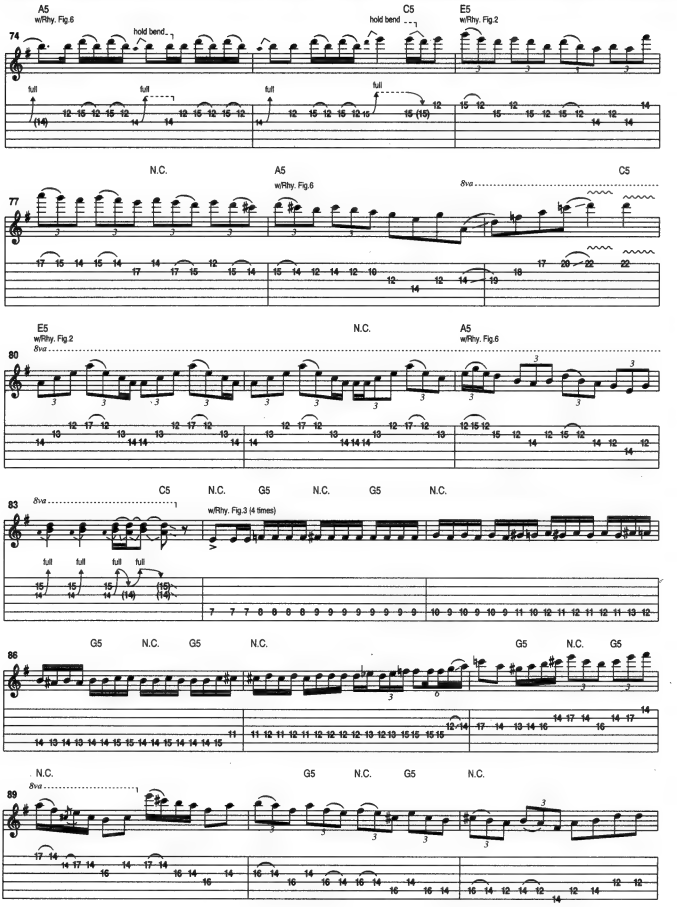
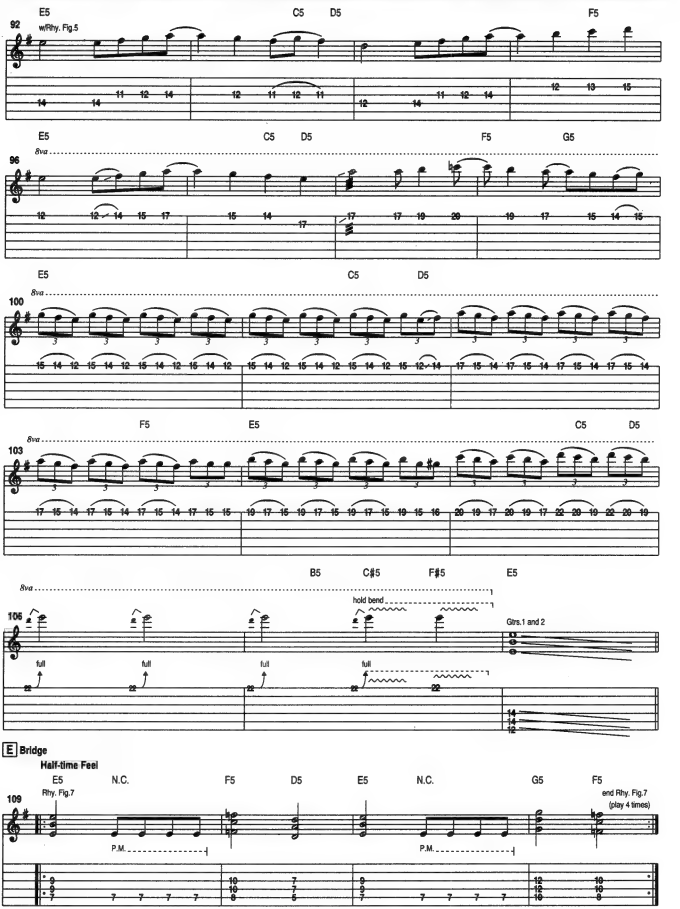
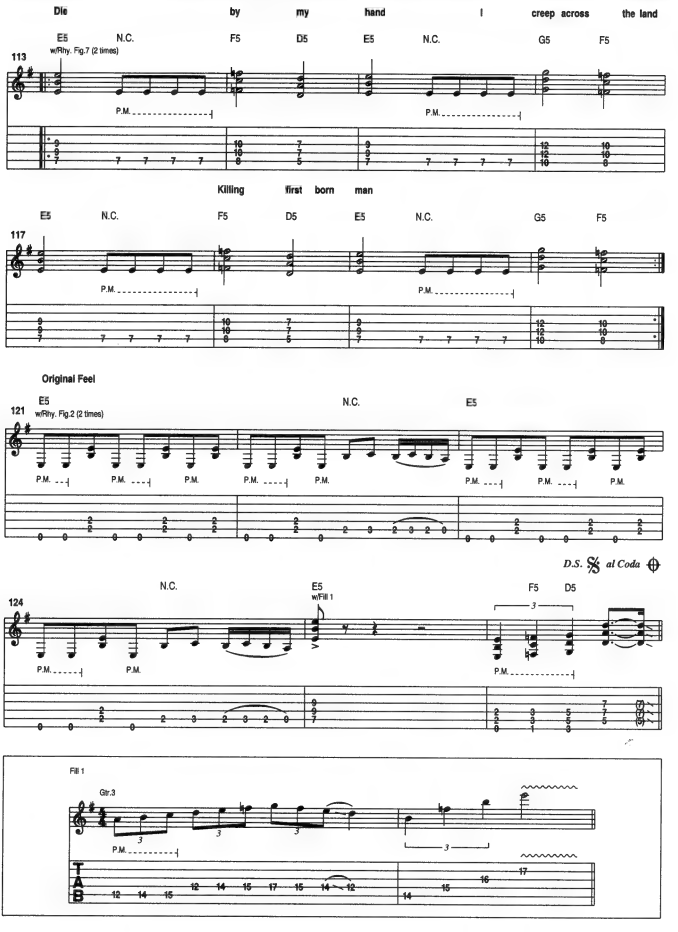
B Verses

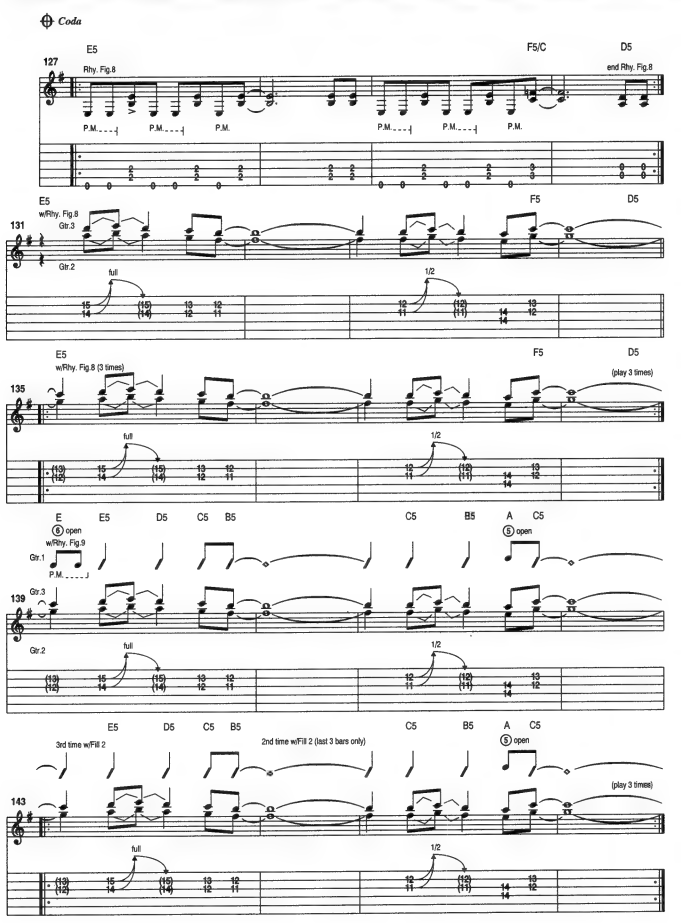
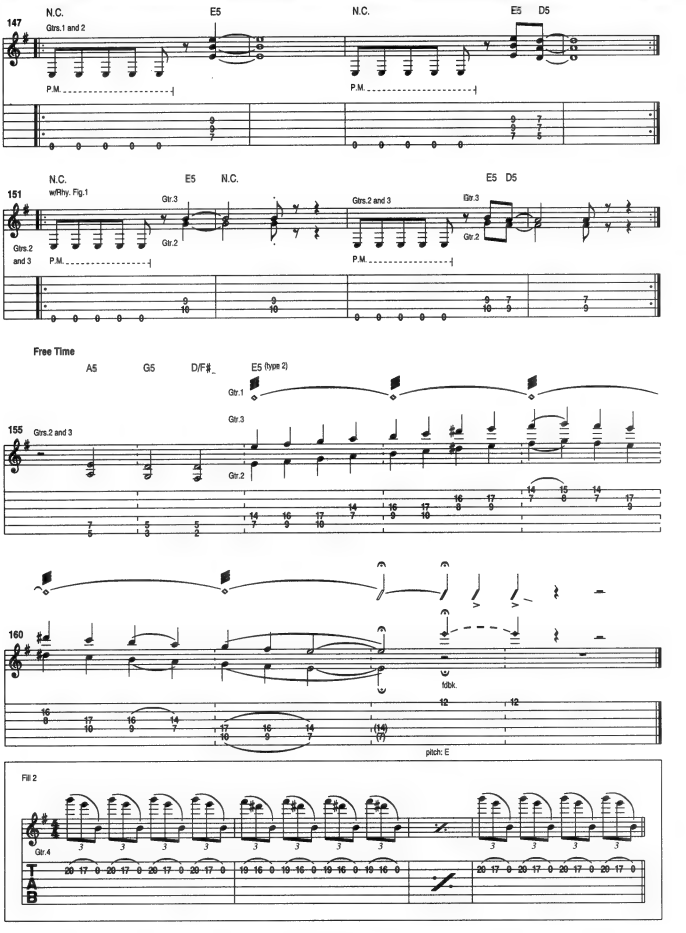
1. Slaves — Hebrews born to serve — To the Pharaoh
2. Now — let my people go — Land of Goshen
3. I — rule the midnight air — The destroyer



Heed — to his every word — Live in fear
Go — I will be with thee — Bush of fire
Born — I shall soon be there — Deadly mass

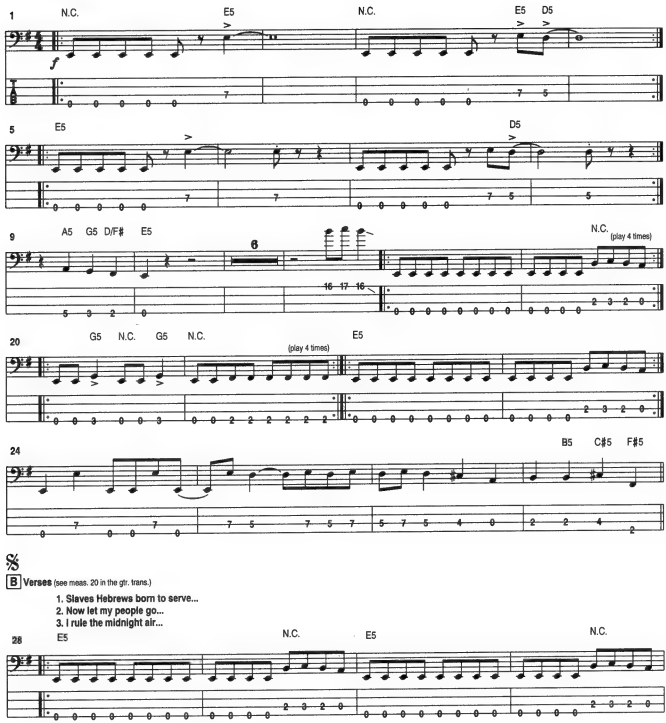


Faith — of the unknown one — The deliverer
Blood — running red and strong — Down the Nile
I — creep the steps and floor — Final darkness

Wait something must be done
Plague darkness three days long
Blood lamb's blood painted door
Four hundred years
Hail to fire
I shall pass
32
E5
N.C.
E5
N.C.
P.M.
36
N.C. G5 N.C. G5 N.C.
G5 N.C. G5 N.C.
G5 N.C. G5
C Chorus
So let it be written
41
N.C.
G5 N.C. G5 N.C.
E5
C5 D5
Rhy. Fig.5
So let it be done
I'm sent here by the chosen one
46
F5
E5
C5 D5
F5 G5
So let it be written
So let it be done
52
E5
N.C.
C5 D5
F5

(3rd time) To Coda
To kill the first born Pharoah's son I'm creeping death
E5
C5
D5
B5
C♯5
F♯5
56
end Rhy. Fig.5
P.M.
60
E5
N.C.
E5
N.C.
P.M.
E5
8va
B5
C♯5
F♯5
64
w/Rhy. Fig.4
Gtr.3
D Guitar Solo
E5
A5
* Rhy. Fig.6
w/Rhy. Fig.2
8va
68
full
1/2
* Throughout Rhy. Fig. 7 play only lowest note of chord when P.M. is indicated.
C5
end Rhy. Fig.6
E5
P.M.
w/Rhy. Fig.2
8va
71
full
1/2

A5
w/Rhy. Fig.6
hold bend
C5
hold bend
E5
w/Rhy. Fig.2
74
full
full
full
full
N.C.
A5
w/Rhy. Fig.6
8va
C5
77
E5
w/Rhy. Fig.2
8va
N.C.
A5
w/Rhy. Fig.6
80
8va
C5
N.C.
G5
N.C.
G5
N.C.
w/Rhy. Fig.3 (4 times)
83
full
full
full
full
G5
N.C.
G5
N.C.
G5
N.C.
G5
86
N.C.
8va
G5
N.C.
G5
N.C.
89

E5
C5
D5
F5
w/Rhy. Fig.5
92
E5
C5
D5
F5
G5
8va
96
E5
C5
D5
8va
100
F5
E5
C5
D5
8va
103
B5
C♯5
F♯5
E5
8va
hold bend
Gtrs.1 and 2
106
full
full
full
full
E Bridge
Half-time Feel
E5
N.C.
F5
D5
E5
N.C.
G5
F5
Rhy. Fig.7
end Rhy. Fig.7
(play 4 times)
109
P.M.
P.M.

Die by my hand I creep across the land
E5 N.C. F5 D5 E5 N.C. G5 F5
w/Rhy. Fig.7 (2 times)
113
P.M.
Killing first born man
117
Original Feel
121
w/Rhy. Fig.2 (2 times)
D.S. 𝄋 al Coda
124
w/Fill 1
Fill 1
Gtr.3
T
A
B


Coda
E5
F5/C
D5
127
Rhy. Fig.8
end Rhy. Fig.8
P.M.
P.M.
P.M.
P.M.
P.M.
P.M.
E5
F5
D5
131
w/Rhy. Fig.8
Gtr.3
Gtr.2
full
1/2
E5
F5
D5
135
w/Rhy. Fig.8 (3 times)
(play 3 times)
full
1/2
E
E5
D5
C5
B5
C5
B5
A
C5
6 open
w/Rhy. Fig.9
Gtr.1
P.M.
6 open
139
Gtr.3
Gtr.2
full
1/2
E5
D5
C5
B5
C5
B5
A
C5
3rd time w/Fill 2
2nd time w/Fill 2 (last 3 bars only)
6 open
143
(play 3 times)
full
1/2

147
N.C.
E5
N.C.
E5 D5
Gtrs.1 and 2
P.M.
P.M.
151
N.C.
E5
N.C.
E5 D5
w/Rhy. Fig.1
Gtr.3
Gtrs.2 and 3
Gtr.2
Gtrs.2 and 3
Gtr.3
Gtr.2
P.M.
P.M.
Free Time
A5
G5
D/F♯
E5 (type 2)
155
Gtrs.2 and 3
Gtr.1
Gtr.3
Gtr.2
160
fdbk.
pitch: E
Fill 2
Gtr.4
T
A
B

"Creeping Death" (bassline)

WORDS AND MUSIC BY JAMES HETFIELD,
LARS ULRICH, CLIFF BURTON AND KIRK HAMMETT

TRANSCRIBED BY STEVE GORENBERG

From Metallica's Elektra recording *Ride The Lightning*

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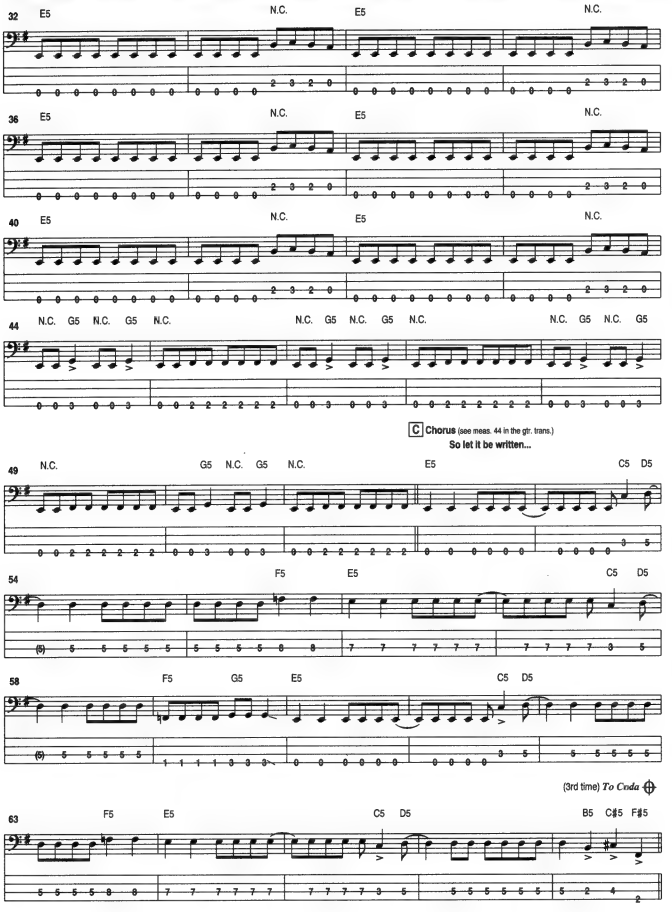
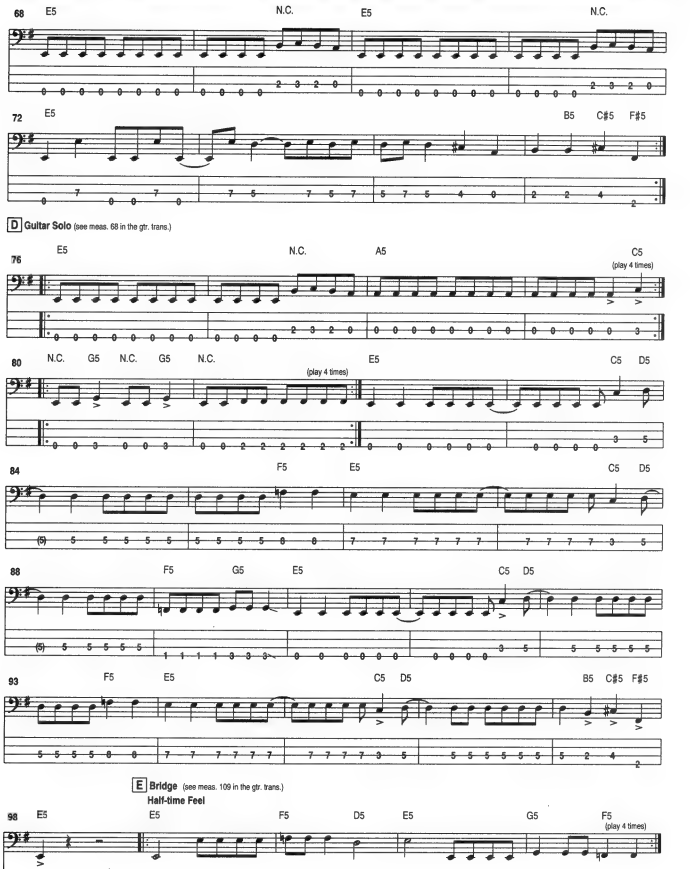
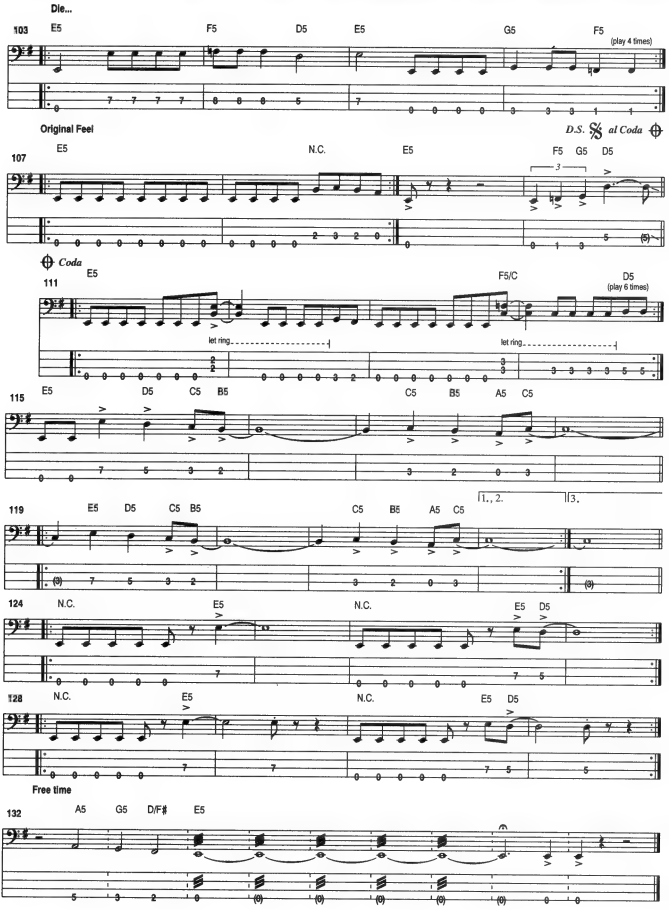

32
E5
N.C.
E5
N.C.
36
E5
N.C.
E5
N.C.
40
E5
N.C.
E5
N.C.
44
N.C. G5 N.C. G5 N.C.
N.C. G5 N.C. G5 N.C.
N.C. G5 N.C. G5
C Chorus (see meas. 44 in the gtr. trans.)
So let it be written...
49
N.C.
G5 N.C. G5 N.C.
E5
C5 D5
54
F5
E5
C5 D5
58
F5
G5
E5
C5 D5
(3rd time) To Coda
63
F5
E5
C5 D5
B5 C♯5 F♯5

68
E5
N.C.
E5
N.C.
72
E5
B5
C#5
F#5
D Guitar Solo (see meas. 68 in the gtr. trans.)
76
E5
N.C.
A5
C5
(play 4 times)
80
N.C.
G5
N.C.
G5
N.C.
(play 4 times)
E5
C5
D5
84
F5
E5
C5
D5
88
F5
G5
E5
C5
D5
93
F5
E5
C5
D5
B5
C#5
F#5
E Bridge (see meas. 109 in the gtr. trans.)
Half-time Feel
98
E5
E5
F5
D5
E5
G5
F5
(play 4 times)

Die...
103
E5
F5
D5
E5
G5
F5
(play 4 times)
Original Feel
D.S. 𝄋 al Coda
107
E5
N.C.
E5
F5 G5 D5
3
Coda
111
E5
F5/C
D5
(play 6 times)
let ring
let ring
E5
D5
C5
B5
C5
B5
A5
C5
115
119
E5
D5
C5
B5
C5
B5
A5
C5
1., 2.
3.
124
N.C.
E5
N.C.
E5
D5
128
N.C.
E5
N.C.
E5
D5
Free time
132
A5
G5
D/F#
E5

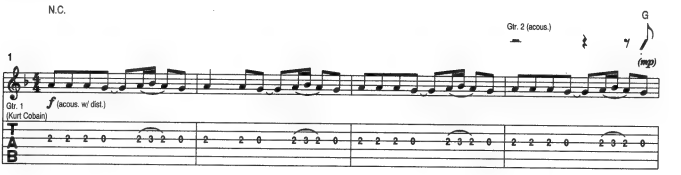
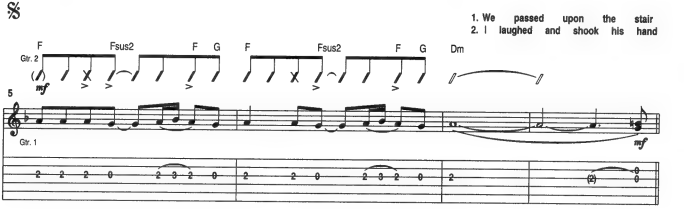
"The Man Who Sold The World"

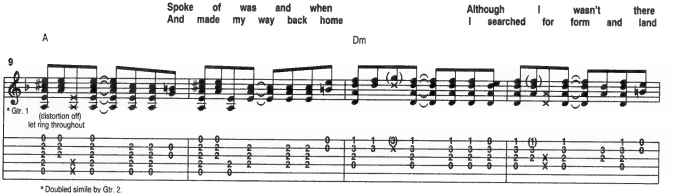
WORDS AND MUSIC BY DAVID BOWIE **TRANSCRIBED BY JEFF PERRIN**

Tune down 1/2 step (low to high: E♭, A♭, D♭, G♭, B♭, E♭)

A Intro

Moderate Rock ♩ = ca. 114



B Verses **

* Doubled simile by Gtr. 2.
** Play repeat simile

From Nirvana's Geffen recording *Unplugged In New York*

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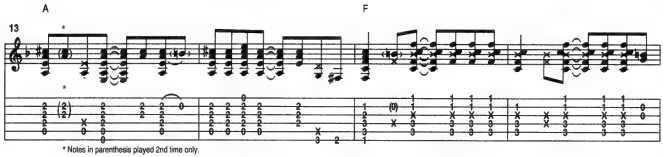
He said I was his friend
For years and years I roamed

which came as a surprise
I gazed a gazely stare

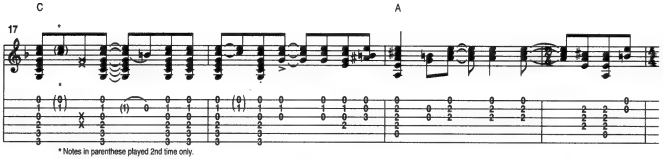
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fill 1



* Notes in parenthesis played 2nd time only.

I spoke into his eyes I thought you died alone
(At all the millions here) I must have died alone

play Rhy. Fill 2, 2nd time

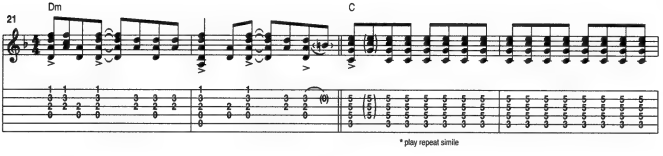


* Notes in parenthese played 2nd time only.

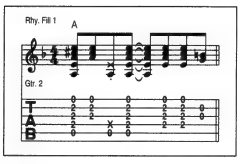
C Chorus *

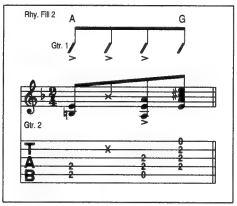
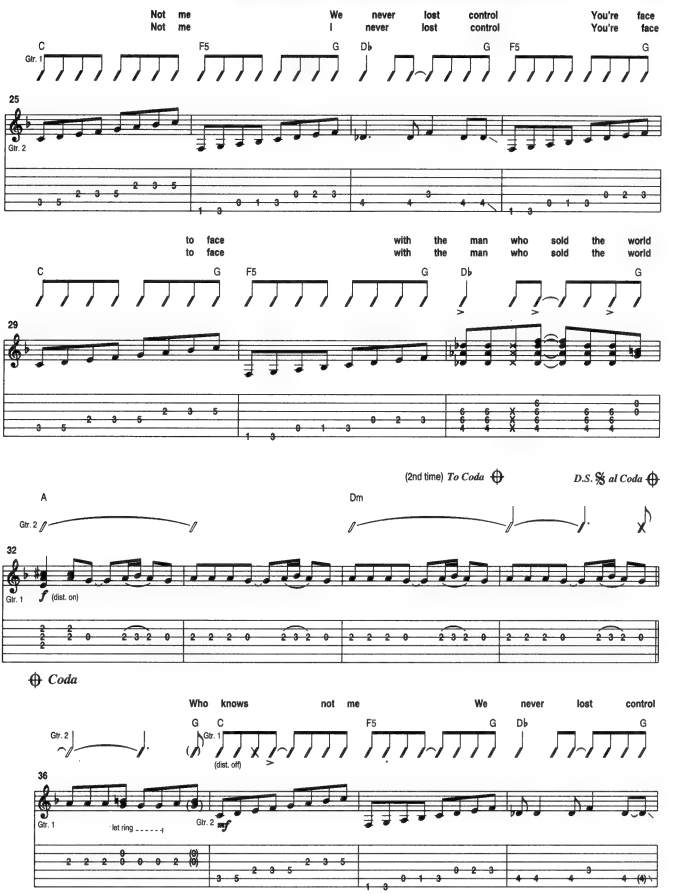
a long long time ago
a long long time ago

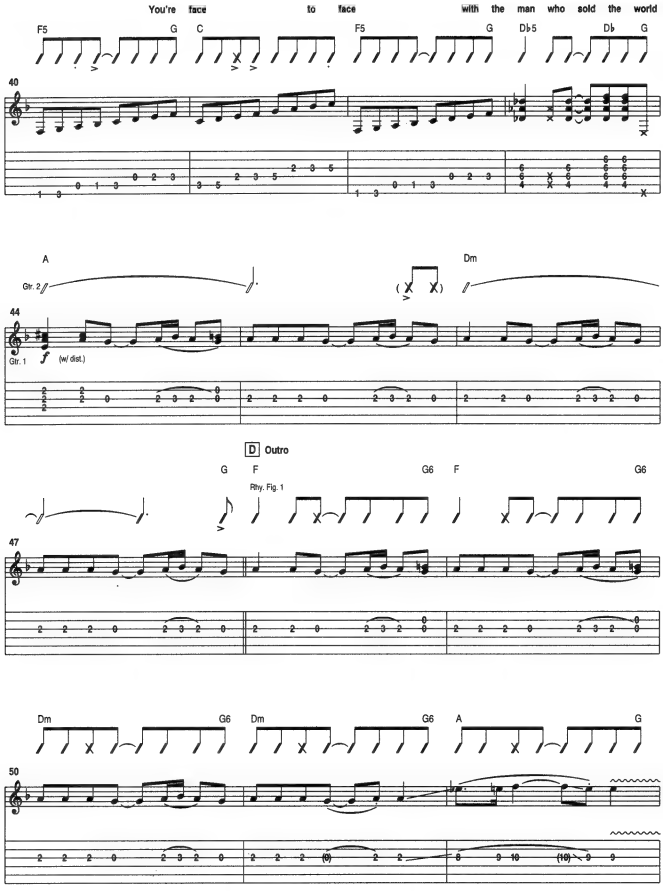
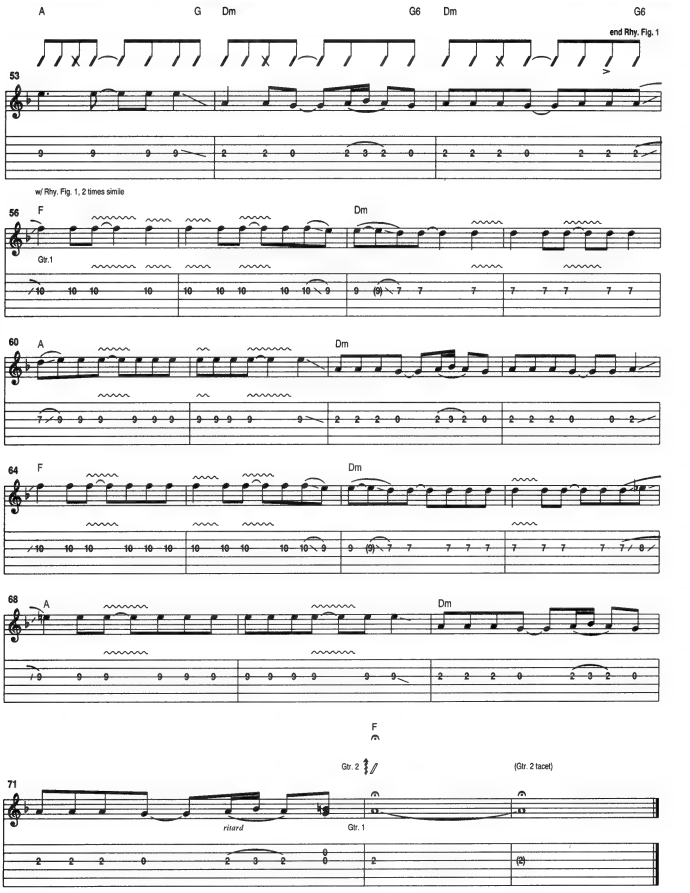
Oh no
Who knows



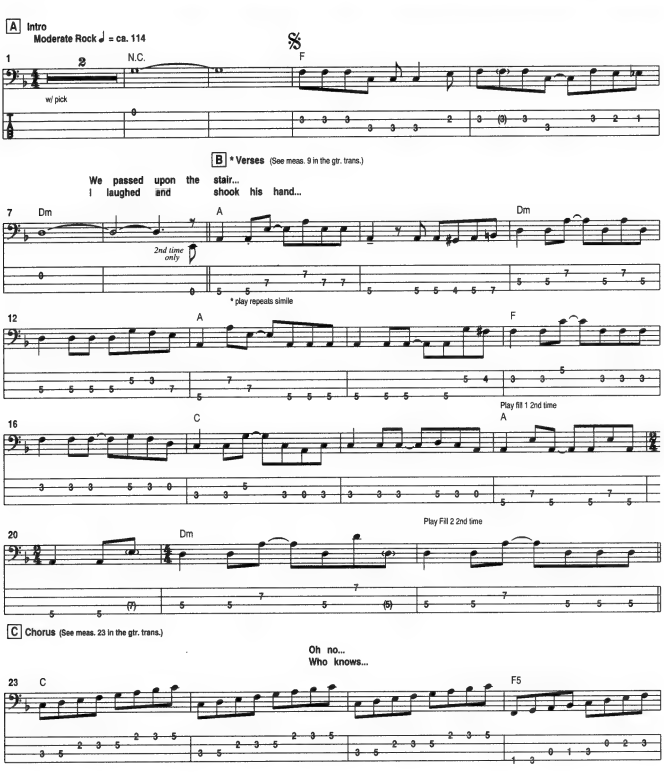
* play repeat simile





Not me
Not me
We never lost control
I never lost control
You're face
You're face
C
F5
G
D♭
G
F5
G
Gtr. 1
25
Gtr. 2
to face
to face
with the man who sold the world
with the man who sold the world
C
G
F5
G
D♭
G
29
(2nd time) To Coda
D.S. 𝄋 al Coda
A
Dm
Gtr. 2
32
Gtr. 1
f (dist. on)
Coda
Who knows not me
We never lost control
G
C
F5
G
D♭
G
Gtr. 2
Gtr. 1
(dist. off)
36
Gtr. 1
let ring
Gtr. 2
mf

You're face to face with the man who sold the world
F5 G C F5 G D♭5 D♭ G
40
A
Gtr. 2
Dm
44
Gtr. 1
(w/ dist.)
D Outro
G F G6 F G6
Rhy. Fig. 1
47
Dm G6 Dm G6 A G
50

A
G
Dm
G6
Dm
G6
end Rhy. Fig. 1
53
w/ Rhy. Fig. 1, 2 times simile
56
F
Dm
Gtr.1
60
A
Dm
64
F
Dm
68
A
Dm
F
Gtr. 2
(Gtr. 2 tacet)
71
ritard
Gtr. 1

"The Man Who Sold The World" (bassline)

WORDS AND MUSIC BY DAVID BOWIE **TRANSCRIBED BY JEFF PERRIN**

From Nirvana's Geffen recording *Unplugged In New York*

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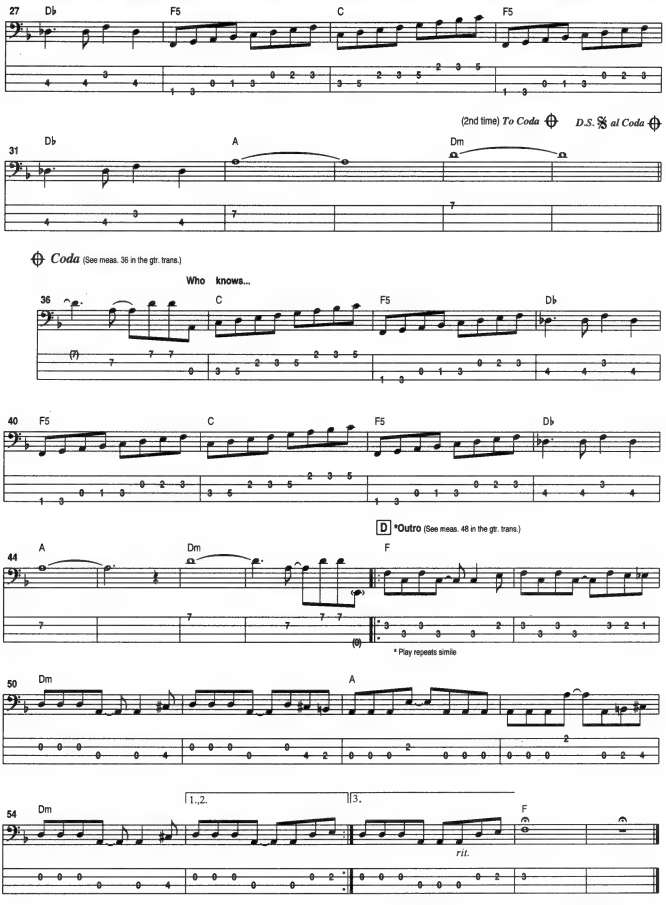

27
Db
F5
C
F5
(2nd time) To Coda
D.S. 𝄋 al Coda
31
Db
A
Dm
Coda (See meas. 36 in the gtr. trans.)
Who knows...
36
C
F5
Db
40
F5
C
F5
Db
D *Outro (See meas. 48 in the gtr. trans.)
44
A
Dm
F
* Play repeats simile
50
Dm
A
54
Dm
1.,2.
3.
F
rit.

"Eruption"

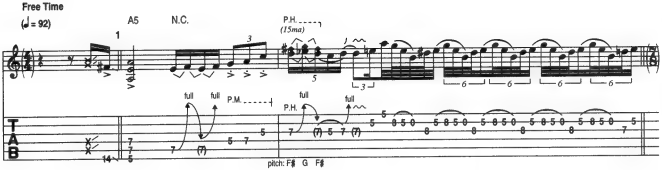
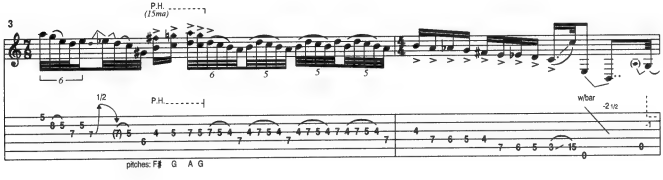
MUSIC BY EDWARD VAN HALEN, ALEX VAN HALEN, DAVID LEE ROTH AND MICHAEL ANTHONY

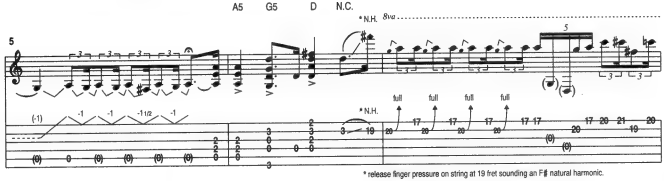
TRANSCRIBED BY ANDY ALEDORT

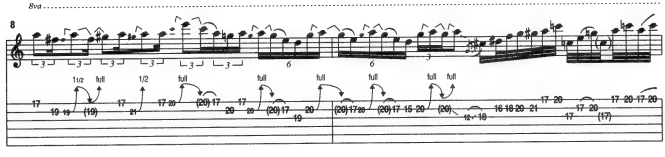
Tune gtr. down 1/2 step (low to high: E♭, A♭, D♭, G♭ B♭ E♭)

Free Time

(♩ = 92)







From the Warner Bros. recording *Van Halen*

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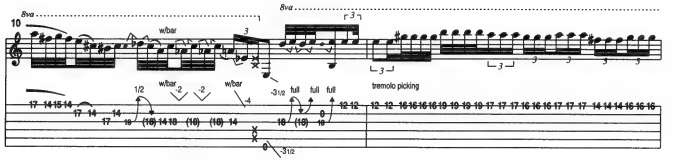
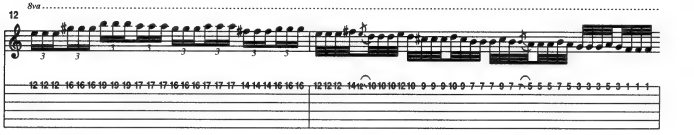
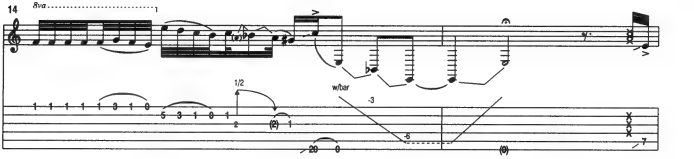
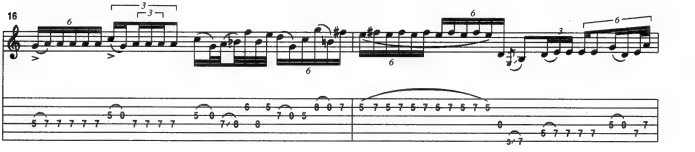
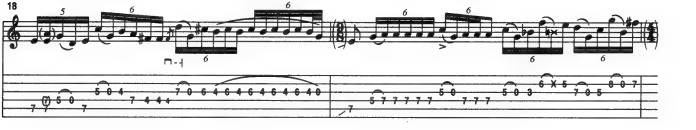
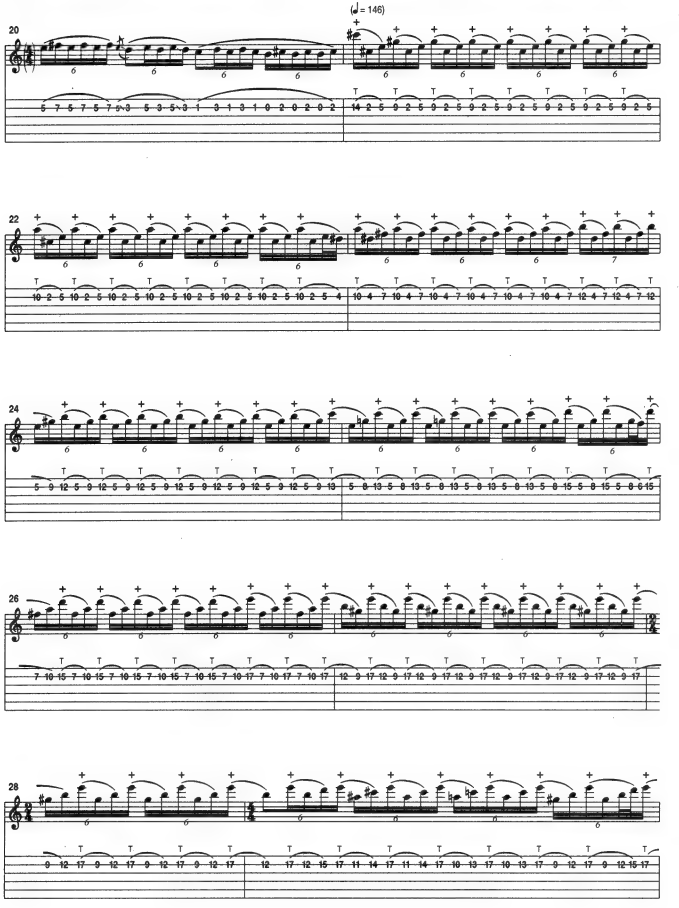
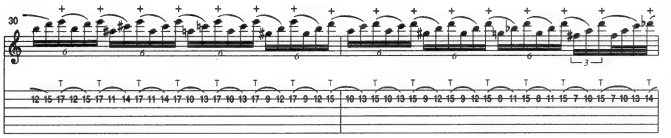
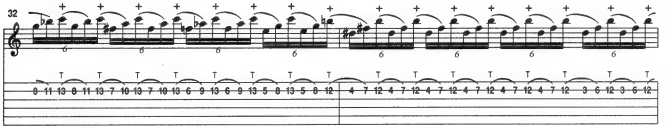
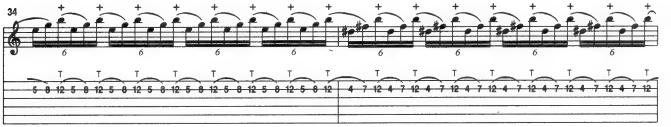
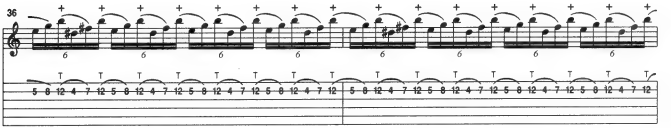
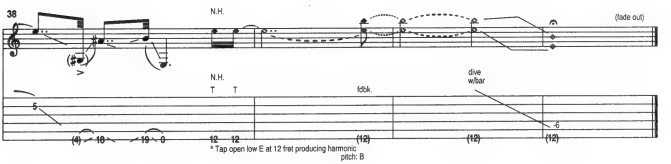

8va
10
w/bar
1/2
full
tremolo picking

8va
12


8va
14
w/bar
1/2

16

18


♩= 146)
20
22
24
26
28





* Tap open low E at 12 fret producing harmonic pitch: B

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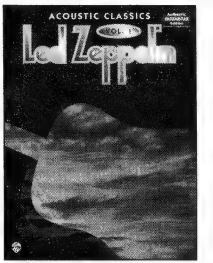

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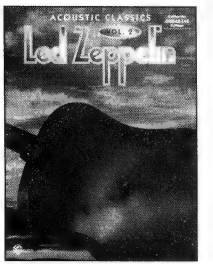

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15 YEARS OF METAL DETECTOR

BY JEFF GILBERT

METALLICA *Kill 'Em All* (Megaforce) What is this crap? The guitars sound like rusty chainsaws and the singer barks like he wants to be let outside to chase a cat. This band has a big underground buzz, but they're not going anywhere. I'll stake my entire reputation on that. ★

JOHN HAHN *Out Of The Shadows* (Leviathan) Guy Mann-Dude has chunks of guys like this in his stool. A candidate for Warrant's *School of Guitar Gods*. The best thing about this album is a track called "Pickin' Your Seat." I can make better sounds pickin' mine. ★

MOTHERHEAD BUG *Zambodia* (Pow Wow) The song "Demon Erection" brought back a few good memories, but other than that, this strange African punk combo with horns, tribal drums and those pipes that make snakes come out of laundry baskets held my interest only as long as my last boner after drinking a six-pack. ★★1/2

MOTORHEAD *Ace Of Spades* (Roadracer Revisited) I listened to this record while running my lawnmower over gravel. Funny how art imitates life. ★★★

AC/DC *Back In Black* (Atlantic) Five great guys, three great chords. Is that really Brian Johnson's voice, or is he choking on a hairball? Just wondering out loud. ★★★

UNLEASHED POWER *Quintet Of Spheres* (Disk Union) I unleashed some power once, a two-flusher. And speaking of crap, this redundant speed metal outfit should think about trading their guitars for plungers since the sound they make is pretty much the same. ★

POPDEFECT *Punch Drunk* (Flip Side) I bet the person who wrote this batch of shopping mall punk wears pre-torn Gap jeans and a T-shirt that smells like Bounce. ★★1/2

EXODUS *Bonded By Blood* (Combat) *Bonded* finish what Slayer's *Show No Mercy* started, but with better riffs, better songs, and a better relationship with Satan. ★★★1/2

RISE ROBOTS RISE *Spawn* (TVT) Why did they take a perfectly good band name and wreck it with "space rap" and other assorted wastes of musical time like synthesizers and girls singing? These robots belong in Uranus. ★

GOD *The Anatomy Of Addiction* (Big Cat) This patience-testing excess of industrial glop with saxophones and a bass clarinet sounds like jazz. And we all know what jazz is: four guys playing different songs at the same time. ★★

GUNS 'N ROSES *Appetite For Destruction* (Geffen) With bands like Ratt, L.A. Guns and Faster Pussycat around, these guys don't stand a chance. ★

DEPRESSIVE AGE *Living In Wait* (CMC) Besides a few formulaic techno-speed metal maneuvers and occasional dramatic posturing, this was a pleasant surprise: like discovering an overlooked roll of toilet paper during a moment of personal crisis. The guitars move your bowels, but in a good way. ★★★

I LOVE YOU *All Of Us* (Geffen) If dinkwad riffs could fly, this album would be an airport. The vocals might make more sense if the singer were wearing a purple dinosaur suit. Two fingers down the throat is the only cure. ★

IRON MAIDEN *Number Of The Beast* (Capitol) My only hang-up with Iron Maiden is the singing, the guitars, the bass and the drums. I don't have any other problems with this otherwise fine record. ★★

SLEEP *Sleep's Holy Mountain* (Mosh) If Candlemass were stinky hippies who smoked a lot of pot, this is what they would sound like. Time to wake up, fellas—no matter how many times you listen to "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida," it's still the Nineties. Exit Sandman. ★★1/2

YNGWIE MALMSTEEN *Rising Force* (Mercury) This Paganini wankfest makes me think that Yngwie goes to bed each night dreaming he was The Great Kat. ★★

ONION *Faster* (Crisis) I was *robbed*—the song "Flying Buttress" is an *instrumental*. And just when I was starting to like mediocre garage pop with too many chord changes again. ★★

HEADLOCK *It Found Me* (Pavement) This came as an unexpected surprise, like cruising down the street with an ass full of Raisin Bran and hitting a speed bump. Brawny thrash riffing riveted together with some seriously abusive drumming. The lead guitar deserves two scoops. ★★★1/2

LEVIATHAN *Deepest Secrets Beneath* (Rock The Nation) My mistake; I thought the title referred to my butt. I suppose this sharp progressive techno-metal, with some of the cleanest guitar work this side of Dream Theater, is pretty cool. But I really wanted an album that had songs about my butt. ★★★

ROXY BLUE *Want Some?* (Geffen) The biggest joke here is "Rob The Cradle," the most blatant Van Halen rip-off ever committed to analog. They would've been better off just covering VH's "And the Cradle Will Rock," instead. Rob the cradle, indeed—guitarist Sid Fletcher should be strung up by his Ernie Ball's. *Want Some?* No thanks, I believe I'll pass. ★1/2

SAINTS & SINNERS *Saints & Sinners* (Savage/BMG) Warning: this piece of excrement was produced by another lump, Aldo Nova. Do your duty—flush twice. ★

SOUTHGANG *Group Therapy* (Charisma) It was working until the vocals kicked in. Maybe the singer had his vocal chords kicked in. If not, then he should. The line forms to the left. ★

THE GRAVEYARD TRAIN *The Graveyard Train* (Geffen) Stops include dull riffs, unrepaired solos, and passé cock rock swagger. All a'board. ★★

HARD MUSIC TOP 25

WEEK ENDING 2/15/95

LAST WEEK	THIS WEEK	ARTIST	TITLE
1	1	VAN HALEN	BALANCE
2	2	GREEN DAY	DOOKIE
5	3	OFFSPRING	SMASH
4	4	PEARL JAM	VITALOGY
6	5	NIRVANA	UNPLUGGED IN NEW YORK
---	6	•SLASH'S SNAKE PIT	IT'S FIVE O'CLOCK...
7	7	BUSH	SIXTEEN STONE
8	8	NINE INCH NAILS	DOWNWARD SPIRAL
3	9	EXTREME	WAITING FOR THE PUNCH...
9	10	STONE TEMPLE PILOTS	PURPLE
10	11	RANCID	LET'S GO
11	12	SOUNDGARDEN	SUPERUNKNOWN
15	13	SPONGE	ROTTING PINATA
14	14	CANDLEBOX	CANDLEBOX
18	15	HOLE	LIVE THROUGH THIS
17	16	TYPE O NEGATIVE	BLOODY KISSES
19	17	BON JOVI	CROSS ROAD
22	18	CORROSION OF CONF..	DELIVERANCE
13	19	JERKY BOYS	SOUNDTRACK
20	20	RAGE AGAINST THE..	RAGE AGAINST THE..
23	21	AEROSMITH	BIG ONES
16	22	PAGE/PLANT	NO QUARTER
25	23	MEGADETH	YOUTHANASIA
12	24	L.A. GUNS	VICIOUS CIRCLE
24	25	METALLICA	METALLICA

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WHITE ZOMBIE

White Zombie - Creep 2000: Songs Of Love, Destruction and Other Synthetic Delusions of the Electric Head (Geffen)

In between their platinum-plus *La Sexorcisto* record and various singles (including a crushing cover of "Children Of The Grave" for *Nativity In Black; A Tribute To Black Sabbath)* White Zombie created *Creep 2000: Songs of Love, Destruction and Other Synthetic Delusions of the Electric Head* - an album that blends the ear-bleeding crunch of overamped guitars with the mechanized electrobeats of dance floor techno. In other words, *What If Trent Reznor Joined Black Sabbath?* Couple that with the flat-out psychedelic freakiness of lead mutant Rob Zombie and White Zombie have created a niche all their own: industrial go-go music.

CONCRETE CORNER

WHITE ZOMBIE

Orange 9mm - Driver Not Included (EastWest)

This bile-spitting monster of an album will go over well with fans of everything from Rage Against The Machine to Helmet. Orange 9mm's *Driver Not Included* burns rubber from the opening notes of leadoff cut "Glistening" and doesn't stop until the final seconds of last track "Cutting & Draining." The band's glorio racket of groove-laden, riff-heavy hardcore makes for a helluva ride. All aboard....

Prick - Prick (nothing/Interscope)

You know music has come a long way when a record company bio describes a songwriter as an "aural sculpto And yet, in the case of Prick's Kevin McMahon, it's an accurate description. The ten derangements, er, arrangements on the band's self-titled debut are simultaneously melodic and abrasive, cohesive and demented Critics have claimed that everything Prick writes sounds wrong and yet always seems right. Confused? Don't Trent Reznor produced the album. Does that help to put things in perspective?

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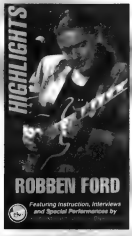

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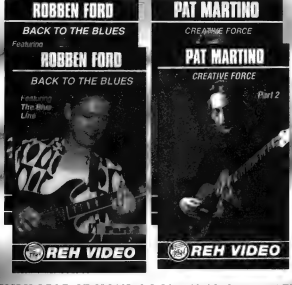

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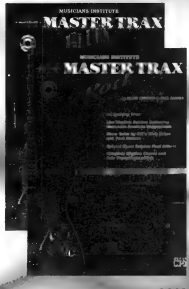

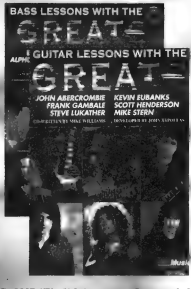

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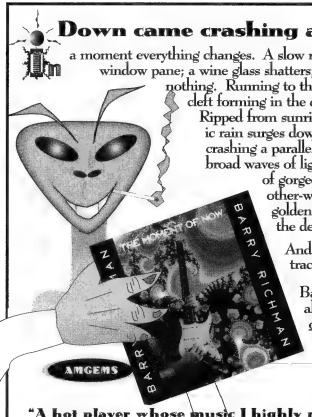

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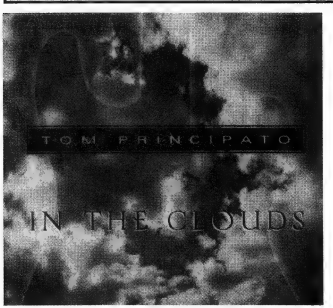

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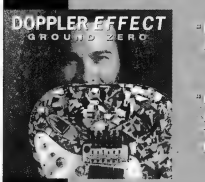

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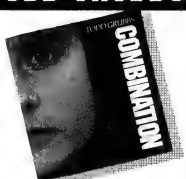

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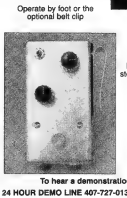

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PETE TOWNSHEND

Continued from page 130

fucked him to death and then proceeded to fuck me to death. And we had her in common. We were both kind of cross-eyed with this woman.

So when Jimmy showed up at the studio, we just started to talk about what we always talked about, which was, "How is she? What's she going through? Has she called you? Has she called me?" And then I said to him, "What are you doing here?" He said, "I'm here to give some weight to the guitar. I'm going to double the rhythm guitar on the overdubs." And I said, "Oh, great." And he said, "What are you going to play?" "A Rick 12," I told him. And he said, "Oh, okay, I'll play a..." whatever it was. It was all very congenial. But meanwhile, Keith was over in the corner, telling the drummer, "Get out of the fucking studio or I'll kill ya. Only Keith Moon plays the drums on a Who record!" That kind of stuff. And the backing vocals were done by some surf band.

GW: Your discovery of feedback has been well documented. But what about other "found" sounds that you pioneered in the early days—like flipping the toggle switch rhythmically or scraping the mic stand across the strings? Were those things as accidental as your discovery of feedback?

TOWNSHEND: No, they were very considered. They were all part of that art school tradition of breaking the rules. I was at an art school where the course was dedicated to breaking the rules, and I just drafted that into my work as a guitar player. Most of the techniques I used were very virulent, violent and aggressively expressive. Because, as I said, I was in this mode where the guitar was a weapon.

GW: After going to those kinds of sonic extremes on *Happy Jack* [*MCA, 1967*] and *The Who Sell Out* [*MCA, 1967*], the guitar on *Tommy* [*MCA, 1969*] seems like a move away from the big amps, big volume, big feedback sort of stuff. Was that an intentional shift?

TOWNSHEND: Well, it was a shift that was very much in the same universe as the shift in my songwriting approach at that time. Which was a move away from the way the Who had been performing and writing pop songs. We'd been nominated by our audience, in a way, to express their own inarticulacy—if that's not a contradiction in terms. But we suddenly found ourselves in a vacant place, lost in the world of Jimi Hendrix and Cream. Cream had come over to the U.S.A. with us for the first time, with loud amplifiers and psychedelic shirts. These were, to some extent, new bands. Compared to them, the Who were an older band. So we were feeling quite out of touch, thinking, "We're not selling singles anymore and neither do we fit into this new

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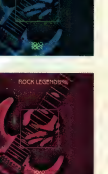

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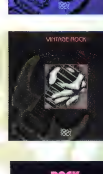

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GW

psychedelic era. We're not an experimental band like the Pink Floyd. We're not a guitar-based blues band like the Cream. We don't have the kind of extreme genius of Hendrix. What do we do?" And I started to look at composition as a big issue. In writing *Tommy*, I was very meticulous about making sure the composition and the harmonies were structured and clean.

GW: The *Who's Next* [*MCA, 1971*] album emerged out of another extended conceptual piece of yours, *Lifehouse*, which you ultimately discarded. Was it simply a matter of taking the best songs that came out of *Lifehouse* and using them for *Who's Next*?

TOWNSHEND: By the time that album was recorded—for the third time in my life—with Glyn Johns at Olympic Studios, I had very little interest in it. I'd been fucking damaged by the *Lifehouse* project. I'd come up with this fantastic idea, and it was going to be the great follow-up to *Tommy*. Unfortunately, nobody was getting it. Actually, the sort of things I was toying with have become like child's play. For example, the plot included allusions to virtual reality. It just seemed like basic art school stuff. But, again, the band didn't understand. And the more I tried to explain it, the more I realized I was Einstein to their cavemen.

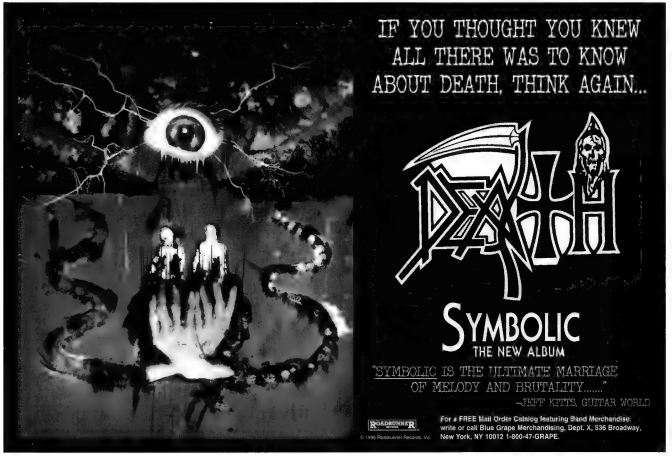
And in the end, I had an actual nervous breakdown. So by the time we were in the studio making *Who's Next* we had great music, and we were playing great because we'd recorded the album something like 15 fucking times! Glyn Johns had a very easy job. He made the record in two weeks. It sounded very fresh, somehow. And then he said, "I think this should be a single album." I said, "But we've got 26 songs!" But he persisted: "Well, I think it will be better as a single album." And that's what we got. And it was better as a single album—for commercial reasons. But then [*in mock pretentious tones*], I'm a composer, you know.

GW: On which Who album are you happiest with Roger's vocal interpretation of what you had written?

TOWNSHEND: Well, actually the most difficult was *Who By Numbers* [*MCA, 1975*], which happens to be one of his favorites. I wrote these very personal, difficult songs and he sang them incredibly well. He wasn't at all in the same place as me, emotionally. I was very disaffected, becoming very alcoholic, very perturbed about Keith using extraordinary drug cocktails which I knew would get him in the end, and maybe having my first marriage problems. But I was very unhappy in the Who at that time, and I think that came out in the work. What was extraordinary was the way Roger took that unhappiness into his own work and sang it. I just think that's incredible.

GW: Do you have any plans to work again with Roger and John, either as the Who or in any other context?

TOWNSHEND: No. I actually really feel that I've finally let go. I think I haven't been entirely honest about this in the past. You know, I said no and then decided, "Well, I don't have to say no. I might change my mind." I've been playing around with it. And, of course the people it's been hurting most haven't been the fans or the record company, but Roger and John. They've been drumming their fingers, waiting to see whether the whim will take me to go and work with them. So I finally said to them, "Fuck what anybody thinks. You're still the Who. I'll be there for you if you want to do something. I'll write some songs if you like. I'll be there in the studio. But I'm not gonna do the road work." I don't want to go to fucking China or go to Colombia and get fucking shot. You know, give me the Bel Air Hotel, Los Angeles, or my home in Twickenham, which looks much the same. [*grins wickedly*] I'm rich and famous and that's what I've got and I'm sticking with it. I don't have to do that fucking Harlem Globetrotters shit anymore. ●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BACK TO THE FUTURE

The biggest guitar innnovations of the last 15 years.

BY ALAN Di PERNA

THE 15 YEARS of GuitarWorld's existence have seen the focus of guitar and gear design shift from sci-fi futurism to a retro reverence for the past.

In the early Eighties, guitar gear was analyzed down to its component parts, and the underlying assumptions behind each part were laid bare. No screw or faceplate escaped heavy critical scrutiny: Is this bit really necessary, or is it a relic of granddad's time? "Can it be improved? Can it be made out of some other material? Does it have to be this way just because it's been this way for 50 or 100 years?

Sometimes, the products yielded by this intense scrutiny were brilliant. Sometimes they were embarrassingly tacky. That's the early Eighties for you.

Like most aspects of modern life, guitar gear was profoundly affected by the computer revolution. Digital audio and MIDI left an indelible mark on the way guitar music is conceived and recorded, not to mention its very tone and texture. The guitar Eighties were this weird kind of crucible, where the state of the art was defined by corporate giants like Yamaha, Roland and Korg on the one hand, and by independent, down-in-the-basement inventors like Floyd Rose, Mike Soldano and Ned Steinberger on the other.

Van Halen's "Frankenstein": the original hot rod guitar.

By the time the Nineties hit, however, the pendulum of guitar gear fashion had made a dramatic swing in a new—that is, old—direction. The retro craze took hold in a big way, and it's still going strong today. But there are many faces of retro: At its worst, retro is the kind of reactionary purism that says, "Everything new sucks; everything old is great." The beauty of the retro trend is that it has introduced some truly gorgeous tones and gear to guitarists who were still 20 years from being born when the first Fender blackface amps and Gretsch White Falcons rolled off the assembly line. In its healthier manifestations, retro has brought a new, balanced perspective to guitar gear—a perspective wide enough to embrace the old *and* the new.

Listed below are some significant milestones in guitar gear's fantastic journey through the past decade and a half—15 years of feverishly trying to shape the future and just as determinedly working to mimic the past.

1. HOT ROD GUITARS

The Hardware Explosion

IT STARTED WITH the concept of replacement parts. In the Fifties and Sixties, if something broke on your guitar, the instrument's manufacturer could furnish you with a new part, just as good as the old one. By the Seventies, replacement-pickup specialists Larry DiMarzio and Seymour Duncan had come along with a radical new idea: maybe you could put in a new pickup that was actually *better* than the stock article. Or if not better, at least more suited to your individual playing style: brighter, louder, mellower...whatever you wanted.

By the dawn of the Eighties, this kind of thinking had extended to every single part of the electric guitar, touching off a frenzied wave of hot rod mania. There were all kinds of nuts, roller bridges and locking tuning keys made in all manner of new alloys. Unfinished guitar bodies and necks, in a variety of woods, had recently come on the market, making it possible for any guitarist to assemble a custom axe from scratch. This could take the form of something like a "super Strat," a guitar that resembled a stock Fender but was made of parts far more premium than stock. Or it could take the form of a hybrid mongrel axe, completely personalized to the player's needs. In a way, it was a triumph of individualism. Why stick with a design Les Paul came up with to suit *his* own needs? Invent one for yourself.

When Edward Van Halen appeared on stages everywhere playing his own custom-built guitar, hot-rodding got a major jump-start, particularly among hard rock/heavy metal players. It fostered a whole new visual aesthetic for guitars—the fucked-up, "chopped" look: unfinished wood, gaping, empty pickup sockets, wires hanging out. These weren't pristine pieces of craftsmanship, but hard-working machines caught in a perpetual process of reinvention as their owners zeroed in on the perfect tone. They were combat weapons, adaptable and battle scarred—not so pretty to look at, perhaps, but able to deliver searing, lethal tone on command.

As the Eighties progressed, guitar journalism became increasingly detail-intensive. As a result, even beginning players grew acutely aware of minutiae like fretwire gauge and its impact on factors like sustain, tone and playability. This kind of mindset would have been inconceivable before the Eighties. The hot rod phenomenon gave rise to many brilliant hardware innovations. But there's one that had a particularly huge impact on the state of guitar playing....

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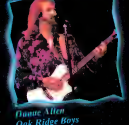

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"I was in a band," recalls Rose, "and we were practicing one night in the winter, in one of those places where you rent a rehearsal space but there's no heat. It was freezing. We were working on a new tune. I wanted to start it with a whammy bar passage. Most nights, I could pull it off and kind of stay in tune. But on that cold night, it was just impossible. I was so pissed off. I went home and said, 'I gotta stop this.'"

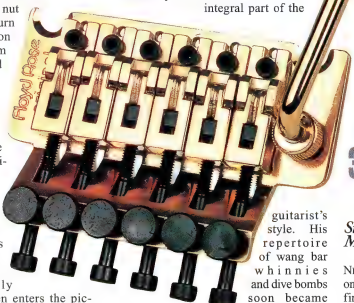
That evening, as Rose fiddled with his guitar while watching TV, he discovered that holding his fingers across the strings behind the nut helped the strings return to "true home" position after the vibrato arm was pressed and released. This revelation gave birth to the idea of building a locking nut to clamp the strings immovably in place at the head of the guitar. From there, Rose went on to devise his now well-known bridge assembly, with its knife-edge pivots and system of fine-tuning screws.

This is actually where Randy Hansen enters the picture. He was one of the system's beta testers. Rose handed Hansen a guitar equipped with one of the new vibrato systems and bet the guitarist he couldn't put the instrument out of tune. "Well, Randy lost the bet," Floyd laughs. After an extended period of violent bar wanging, Hansen finally slammed the guitar down on the stage, shattering the wood beneath the pivot points. "The only way he could get it out of tune was by breaking the guitar," Rose triumphantly concludes.

The guitarist who really put the Floyd Rose system on the map is, of course, Edward Van Halen. In 1982, Rose struck a distribution deal with Kramer Guitars, which had just signed an endorsement deal with Van Halen. Inevitably, the guitarist got hold of the Floyd Rose system and took it immediately. Rose says Eddie even had some design input into the final version of the bridge assembly.

"But not the input he thinks," laughs the inventor. "Edward has said that it was his idea to use knurled-edge fine tuners. But actually I'd used them before I met him. It just so happens that the first model I showed him had pan-head screws for the fine tuners. What he really did contribute, though, was the 'whale tail' look [*the upward angle of the bridge's back end*]. I asked him how much range he thought the fine tuners should have. He suggested a whole step, which is more than I'd planned for originally. 'Sometimes I like to tune my E string down to a D,' he told me. I realized, 'Of course. He's right.' But the only way to achieve that, without having the bridge be in the way of your right hand, was to move it back and up."

Van Halen took to the Floyd Rose with all the exuberance of a suburban teen who's purloined the keys to dad's car. This inventive piece of hardware became an integral part of the guitarist's style. His repertoire of wang bar whinnies and dive bombs soon became staples of the heavy metal guitar vocalary. The Floyd Rose system gave birth to a host of imitations, and also a host of lawsuits, as Rose had the foresight to patent his invention. He just recently won a $1.5 million lawsuit against Kahler, maker of the Floyd's main competitor.



3. THE GRAPHITE PADDLE

Steinberger's Electric Guitar Makeover

NED STEINBERGER'S HEADLESS guitar was one of the landmark axes of the Eighties. He first built the instrument as a bass, introducing it in 1979. The guitar version hit the market in 1982. The design brought together many of the innovative ideas that were hanging expectantly in the air at the turn of the last decade. Among these was Steinberger's use of graphite (or, for the truly anal, carbon-enforced molded epoxy resin) instead of wood for his guitar's body and

neck. Far more dense and rigid than wood, graphite eliminated dead spots in the instrument's resonant response. Steinberger pared the traditional electric guitar shape down to just enough material on which to mount the pickups, bridge and tone controls. Steinberger's Trans-trem bridge allows all six strings to be transposed up or down simultaneously, making it possible for the player to extend the guitar's register and to perform passages involving open strings and harmonics in a variety of different keys without having to capo or retune the guitar. The tuning keys are mounted on the bridge and the instrument has no headstock, which caused quite a sensation when it was first introduced. Steinberger also came up with the idea of using strings with balls at both ends. Attached up behind the nut *and* at the bridge, they offer an alternative approach to achieving the kind of tuning stability offered by a locking nut system. As a final innovation, Steinberger chose to equip his instruments with low-impedance EMG active pickups, which had been introduced some four years earlier.

The Steinberger L-Series guitar (as it later came to be known) jived perfectly with the post-modern, minimalist leanings of Eighties design and spawned a host of imitators like the British-made Bond guitar, with its unique stepped fretboard. The Steinberger bridge and neck system, as well as EMG pickups, also turned up on the Ovation solidbody introduced by Steve Klein in 1990.

Far more than a momento of the New Wave early Eighties, the Steinberger L-Series guitars were truly prophetic instruments. They blazed a trail that more and more guitar makers will inevitably follow as wood supplies become increasingly scarce. The recently introduced Parker Fly guitar, with its innovative design and marriage of wood and synthetic materials, is in many ways the latest chapter in the story,begun by Ned Steinberger.

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4. HOME RECORDING

The Indoor Revolution

BEFORE TASCAM INTRODUCED the first Portastudio in 1980, the vast majority of guitarists were merely warriors in the vast music biz army. The Portastudio gave guitarists the power to become generals. In the Forties, Charlie Christian single-handedly promoted guitarists from the rhythm section to the soloist's spotlight. Four decades later, the Portastudio helped promote guitarists to the ranks of songwriters, arrangers and producers, positions which only a few guitarists like Jimmy Page and Brian May had managed to attain. The whole focus changed. Guitarists no longer thought only about their own parts but turned their attention to the big picture.

Tascam 144 Portastudio

Before the 1980 introduction of the Portastudio (the Fostex 4-track cassette system made its debut the same year), home recording was a costly and daunting proposition. You had to buy a separate multitrack recorder, mixing board and power amp just to get started. Everything was expensive, and you had to know how to hook the whole thing up. The Portastudio put all that into one integrated, streamlined, not-prohibitively-priced package. This made it ridiculously easy for guitarists to start experimenting with combining melodies and chord progressions, bass lines and lead riffs...Guitar players began to become literate about things like eq. In the studio, instead of saying, "Duh, this doesn't sound right," they could now

15 YEARS OF GEAR

specify, "Um, give me about 3 dB at 2.5 kHz." It gave recording engineers the fits.

At first, home recording gear was used mainly for demos. But with the advent of the new, eight-track digital systems by Tascam, Alesis, Fostex, Sony and others, it is now possible to make finished masters at home.

5. MiDi

Revenge of the Nerds

IT STARTED OUT as a plug, but turned into a revolution. Initially conceived as keyboard technology, MIDI [*Musical Instrument Digital Interface*] soon proved useful for guitarists, too. In 1983, five synth manufacturers convened and agreed on a computer protocol that would allow the keyboard on one synthesizer to play the sounds in a second synth. At first, that's all anybody expected MIDI to do.

But since it *was* designed to transmit all kinds of complex keyboard pitch and velocity data, it was more than qualified to work as a switching system for guitar rigs. Fomerly, switching systems had been expensive, voltage-controlled, custom-made affairs that only guys in Genesis and Yes could afford. MIDI provided a more accessible, universal way to do the job. Manufacturers of digital effects processors and even amp companies joined their synthesizer brethren in adopting the industry-wide standard and including it in their gear—just in time for the rising popularity of massive rack-mount guitar rigs. Beyond mere switching, more adventurous guitarists could use MIDI to gain real-time, footpedal-based control over effects parameters like reverb decay times, predelay, or echo rates.

The arrival of good, affordable MIDI sequencers and drum machines also freed guitarists from the tyranny of band situations. They could now program their own backing tracks, making it possible to rehearse, record and even perform without being dependent on outside support. Of course, MIDI is no substitute for good musicians. But at the very least, it helped countless guitarists with their rhythmic chops, soloing fluidity and arrangement skills.

6. PRESETS! PRESETS! PRESETS!

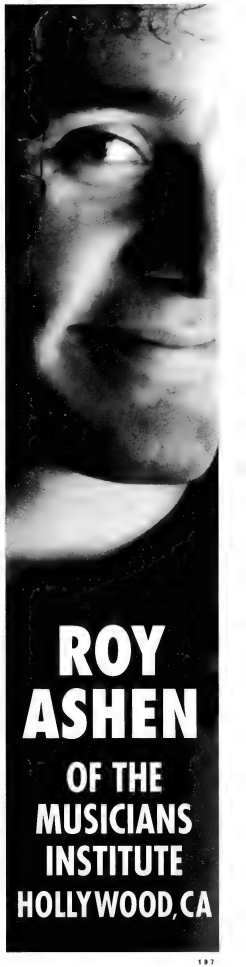
Effects Go Digital

IT WAS IN the late Seventies that guitarists first began forsaking their analog stomp boxes in favor of digital effects units. The quest was for higher fidelity. The distinction between guitar effects and recording studio effects began to blur. Delay was the first effect to go digital. The MXR DDL and Deltalab Effectron began to eclipse both tape-based echo and the old "bucket brigade" analog delay pedals.

The next big turning point was the release of the Yamaha SPX-90 in 1984. The "chameleon" nature of the SPX-90 made it enormously attractive to guitarists. It could be a chorus, a delay, a reverb, a compressor, an eq...This sort of versatility was unheard of prior to '84. Still, the SPX-90 could produce just one effect at a time. Devices that could chain multiple effects would come a few years later. And when they did, the digital effects boom truly went nuclear. One of the effects obtainable on guitar multi-effects units was digitally simulated guitar amp distortion. Now the line between preamp and effects began to seriously blur. The "analog (sometimes tube) preamp with digital effects section" became quite a hot item.

Perhaps the most dramatic result of the digital effects boom was the arrival of preset memory banks. Guitarists suddenly had instantaneous access to 128 totally different sounds—all carefully programmed at the factory, utilizing complex combinations of digital effects and distortion. This was a boon, particularly to live players who need to change sounds in a hurry, and to guitarists in cover bands who need to sound like James Burton on one song and Ritchie Blackmore on the next. But presets invariably led guitarists into the same evil that corrupted keyboardists during the Eighties: generic, off-the-rack tones. Few guitarists had the time or patience to program their own sounds. So they just used the factory presets. And since everybody was using

The "chameleon": Yamaha's SPX-90



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15 YEARS OF GEAR

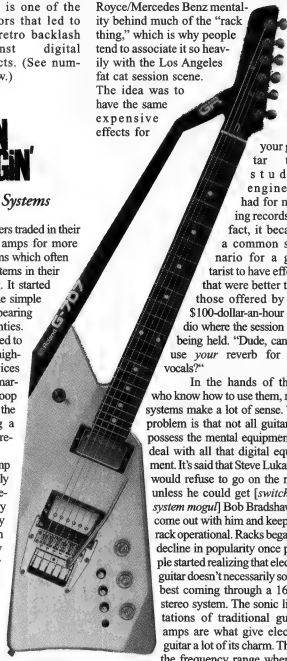
the same presets, everything started to sound the same. This is one of the prime factors that led to the retro backlash against digital effects. (See number 15 below.)

7. FRIGGIN' IN THE RIGGIN'

Amps Become Rack Systems

IN THE EIGHTIES, many players traded in their humble integrated guitar amps for more complex component systems which often rivaled high-end stereo systems in their complexity—and price tag. It started innocently enough, with the simple effects loops that began appearing on amps in the mid Seventies. The effects loop was invented to accommodate all the new, high-fidelity digital effects devices just then starting to hit the market. (See number 6.) The loop provided a real hi-fi place in the signal chain by inserting a patch point between the pre-amp and power amp.

The next step was for amp manufacturers to offer totally separate power amps and pre-amps. Again, it was all very "tweak audiophile," very "yuppie stereo system." In fact, another thing the new power amps and effects gear made possible was the ability to run in stereo. Where guitarists once showed up for a gig with a combo amp, or with a head and some cabs, they now started appearing with a large road case crammed with electronic gear and a pair of speakers that looked like something from a high-end P.A. system.



Roland's G-707 synth controller

Back when digital processors could only perform one effect at a time, it was more or less necessary for a guitarist to have a bunch of them if he wanted to cover several effects simultaneously—one unit for compression, one for eq, one for delay, one for chorus, one for reverb...etc. But digital multi-effects processors made it possible to simplify that. But then the vibe became: "Well, I love the chorus on this multi-effects unit and the reverb on that one, so I gotta have them both in my rack." Even conventional guitar amps began supporting multiple effects loops, and effects loops with adjustable levels, to accommodate all this hardware.

There was a real Rolls Royce/Mercedes Benz mentality behind much of the "rack thing," which is why people tend to associate it so heavily with the Los Angeles fat cat session scene. The idea was to have the same expensive effects for your guitar that studio engineers had for mixing records. In fact, it became a common scenario for a guitarist to have effects that were better than those offered by the $100-dollar-an-hour studio where the session was being held. "Dude, can we use *your* reverb for our vocals?"

In the hands of those who know how to use them, rack systems make a lot of sense. The problem is that not all guitarists possess the mental equipment to deal with all that digital equipment. It's said that Steve Lukather would refuse to go on the road unless he could get *[switching system mogul]* Bob Bradshaw to come out with him and keep his rack operational. Racks began to decline in popularity once people started realizing that electric guitar doesn't necessarily sound best coming through a 16-bit stereo system. The sonic limitations of traditional guitar amps are what give electric guitar a lot of its charm. That's the frequency range where it "lives." But to think that rack systems are evil and never appropriate is just as stupid as thinking that you've got to have a rack rig even to play surf instrumentals.

8. BLEEPED OUT

Guitar Synthesizers

WHAT ARE THEY good for? When it comes to guitar synthesizers, "Absolutely nothin'" is still the answer of choice for many guitarists. But there's no denying that guitar synths have carved out their own niche over the past 18 or so years. The first major guitar synth was the ill-fated ARP Avatar, which

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9. THE THIRD CHANNEL

Hot Rod Amp Mods

made its appearance in the late Seventies. Big, bulky and ridiculously expensive, it was notoriously inconsistent and damned near impossible to figure out. ARP was a very successful manufacturer of keyboard synths. The Avatar drove them to bankruptcy.

In 1980, Roland began turning out more practical guitar synths, which were put to good use by players like Robert Fripp, Adrian Belew and Andy Summers. Another notable Eighties guitar synth was the SynthAxe, which found a champion in Allan Holdsworth. The Stepp DG1, Yamaha G10 and various Casio models were also contenders.

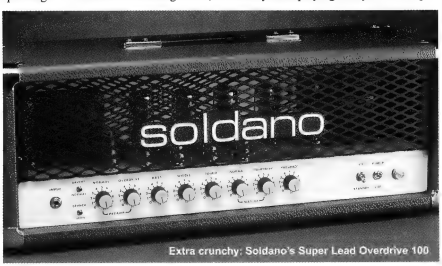
The main problem with guitar synthesizers has always been tracking-related. In the early days, there was an embarrassingly noticeable time delay between the moment a string was struck and the moment the corresponding note was sounded. String bends, hammer-ons, pull-offs, whammy bar moves and other conventional rock techniques just confused the guitar synth's "electronic brain." In short, it couldn't deal with all the things that make guitar playing fun in the first place.

But for guitarists who were willing to embrace it primarily as an orchestration tool and textural source, guitar synthesis *has* proven useful. The advent of MIDI in 1983 along with Midi-compatible guitar synths like Roland's GR-700 (also introduced in '83) made it possible for a guitar synthesizer to drive any MIDI tone module; guitarists and keyboardists now had equal access to the same electronic sounds.

Given the current vogue for vintage gear and raw, grungy tones, it's questionable how many rock guitarists are actually interested in guitar synthesis. But then, musical styles have always been subject to abrupt and dramatic change. Who knows what the future will bring?

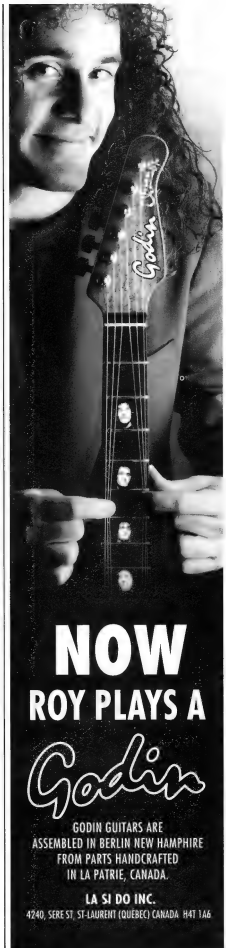
THE COMING OF channel switching in the Seventies endowed amps with two standard channel options: clean and crunch. Mike Soldano upped the ante by adding a third choice—ultra, super, high-grain roar—thus defining one of the most popular sounds in recent guitar rock. Fittingly enough, Soldano came from Seattle and had earned his living for years as a builder of hot rod cars. A rock guitarist too, he began modifying amps just to please himself.

"I wanted a kind of distortion that would be high gain," he explains, "but that would still be transparent and have character, so that you could tell a single coil from a humbucker. I was after definition. When you're playing really fast, complicated lines or playing weird chords with lots of notes in them, high gain tends to just turn it all to mush. I wanted a kind of high-gain sound that would still have the attack of a clean amp."



Extra crunchy: Soldano's Super Lead Overdrive 100

Soldano's high-gain Marshall modification—a 12AX7 tube added to the front end, plus some gourmet tone control tweaks—became an industry standard. In many ways he is the successor to pioneering innovators likeMesa/Boogie's Randall Smith, who started out modifying amps and ended up setting industry standards with his own designs. Some friends of Soldano encouraged him to build his first amps, and in 1987 he took two of these and moved down to L.A. Howard Leese of Heart bought one and started spreading the word about this new kid in town who could build these amazing amps. Out on the opposite coast, in an entirely different guitar uni-



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verse, Lou Reed declared himself a Soldano man. Along with companies like Matchless, VHT, THD and Kendrick, Soldano helped bring a new "boutique amplifier" sensibility to the world of rock guitar.

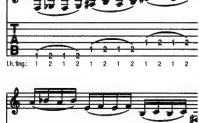
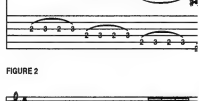
10. THE HOLY WRIT

Tablature & transcription

TABLATURE AND MODERN Western music notation both date back to the 15th century. But it wasn't until the 1980's that rock guitarists started using them with any degree of seriousness. In the Fifties, Sixties and Seventies, rock guitarists did not read music. Or if they did, they kept it to themselves. Reading was considered a tad pretentious, not to mention nerdy. This was partially attributable to the fact that accurate transcriptions of rock songs were not readily available back then. Sheet music was prepared by guys in bow ties who thought rock and roll was "junk." Printed music for rock hits was rarely in the right key, and the chord progressions were often "improved upon." You could buy the sheet music for "Louie Louie" and find augmented 9th chords in the turnaround. Guitar solos were rarely printed; when they were, they bore absolutely no resemblance to what was played on the record. So, rock guitarists worked things out by ear. If they didn't figure something out exactly right, well, that's how original styles were born.

All that changed with the birth of the shred era and the advent of magazines like Guitar World. It became increasingly difficult to hash out by ear what guitarists like Steve Vai or Joe Satriani were playing. The aspiring shredder was in luck, however. Right around this time, the job of rock guitar transcription fell into the hands of people who genuinely loved the music and who could religiously render every little wiggle and whip played by their heroes. New symbols were invented to notate modern whammy bar techniques and other rock moves.

All this has been something of a mixed blessing, however. While the widespread availability of accurate transcriptions has raised the overall level of technique among today's rock guitar players, it has also tended to foster a lamentable degree of conformity and general lack of imagination. Which is one reason why passionate guitar "illiterates" like Kurt Cobain are currently so popular. A famous American poet once said: "Poetry is that which is lost in translation." Rock and roll may well be "that which is lost in transcription."

FIGURE 1



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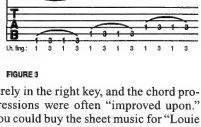

FIGURE 3

11. CANNED HEAT

The Scholz Rockman

ELECTRONICS WIZ, GUITARIST and all-around sonic architect for the band Boston, Tom Scholz built the first Rockman for his own use. "It was a result of me finding out that all the things I like most in a guitar sound could all be packaged in a tiny unit, even with the technology back in 1982," Scholz said last year. "That gave rise to actually putting it on the market and making it available as a headphone amp."

People promptly discovered that the output of Scholz's small, blue headphone amp could be plugged right into a recording console—or, better yet, straight into a tape machine—for a tone that sounded uncannily like a roaring huge amp stack with microphones on it. The Rockman is what made D.I. [*direct into the soundboard*] guitar a viable option in the studio and on stage, and it was the first device to overcome the notorious thinness of direct guitar. People were skeptical at first. But then word leaked out that Billy Gibbons' fat, rich guitar tone on ZZ Top's *Afterburner* had been achieved with a Rockman.

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15 YEARS OF GEAR

so much as a 10-watt amp without sending the old lady downstairs into a rage. At the opposite end of the recording spectrum, the Rockman made life much easier for session guitarists and studio engineers. It could fit right inside a guitar case, eliminating the need to cart an amp around. Hours of time ordinarily spent fussing with microphones were saved. With the variables of room acoustics, temperature and humidity eliminated, a far more consistent sound could be achieved from session to session, studio to studio.

It was a mite too consistent, in some cases. By the late Eighties, a generic "Rockman sound" had become all too recognizable, in everything from beer commercials to quintuple-platinum pop singles. In tasteful hands, however, it continues to be just as useful as a capo or an Allen wrench. Lots of other great little direct guitar boxes, like Tech 21's SansAmp, have come along, but the Rockman is still going strong.

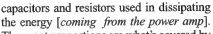
12. PSYCHOTIC REACTION

Speaker Emulation

AS REALISTIC AS some guitar preamps and direct recording boxes sounded, some guitarists still felt there was something missing: a hard-to-pinpoint, yet undoubtedly real, physical sensation that they experienced when they were playing through an amp, but which just wasn't there when they recorded direct.

That intangible "something" is the electronic interaction between speaker and amplifier (technically known as back EMF, or electromotive force), in response to the player's dynamics. The man responsible for putting EMF back into the equation was Aspen Pittman, vintage tube amp collector and historian, and head of Groove Tubes Electronics.

In 1983, Pittman convened a team of engineers to work on the problem. Fittingly enough, Pittman's collaborators included Dick Rosmini, who'd been instrumental in developing the Tascam Portastudio. By 1985 they filed for a patent on an invention Pittman describes as "a combination of coils,



Groove Tube's Speaker Emulator

capacitors and resistors used in dissipating the energy [*coming from the power amp*]. The exact proportions are what's covered by patent. It's like your favorite salad dressing: you can read all the ingredients on the back of the label, but that doesn't mean you know how to combine them."

All most guitarists needed to know was that the thing sounds great. The technology first appeared on the Groove Tube Studio Preamp, which came out in 1985. The following year it appeared as a stand-alone product, the Groove Tube Speaker Emulator. The design has been refined and tweaked over the years. Like the Floyd Rose tremolo system, the Groove Tube speaker emulation circuit has been the focus of several heated patent lawsuits. Pittman has staunchly defended his copyright on the design. A few years ago, he signed a deal licensing the technology to Marshall for their own speaker emulator.

13. POINTY GUITARS

The Molecular Shape of Testosterone

THE GIBSON FLYING V, Explorer and Moderne were clearly on the sharp-edged side. But the roots of the classic Eighties pointy guitar can be found in the mid-Seventies creations of luthier Bernardo Chavez Rico and his company, B.C. Rich: the Mockingbird, the Eagle and the immortal Rich Bich. Credit for inventing the truly modern pointy guitar, however, must go to California luthier Grover Jackson, whose Jackson Soloist, first introduced in 1980, took the basic Fender Strat body and sharpened it to S&M spikiness. Jackson also pioneered that milestone of Western civilization,

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the hockey stick headstock. These features would recur throughout the decade on countless axes made by Jackson, Charvel and a host of other companies that sprang up to fill the world with sharp-edged guitars. Another pointy pioneer was Dean Zelinsky, whose Dean Guitars were readily recognizable by their trademark, a heavily engorged Flying V-style headstock.

Flashy and trashy, the pointy guitar perfectly complemented the look of Eighties hair bands and the sound of Eighties shred. The guitars were invariably equipped with a locking tremolo system, for dive-bombing, and 24-fret necks, for orgiastic climaxes to extended solos., the pointy movmento also ushered in a new era of "girlie" guitar advertising—big-hair bimbos provocatively posed, wearing little or nothing but the ax itself. The feminists said "No!" but the young boys, they understood. Images of disheveled metal sirens also figured prominently on pointy guitar paint jobs. Other popular subjects included sci-fi monsters, sunsets and the kind of lunar landscapes that frequently adorn the sides of vans.

Today, pointy guitars have become a little embarrassing. But they will almost certainly be the collectors' items of tomorrow. Campy, kitschy, highly stylized products of their era, they will become to future generations what the Vox Guitarorgan, Coral Electric Sitar and Ovation Breadwinner are to ours.

Tom Anderson Hollow T with Pau Ferro fretboard and quilted maple top

14. MAKE MINE WENGE

Wacky Woods Worm Their Way In

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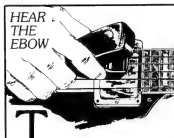

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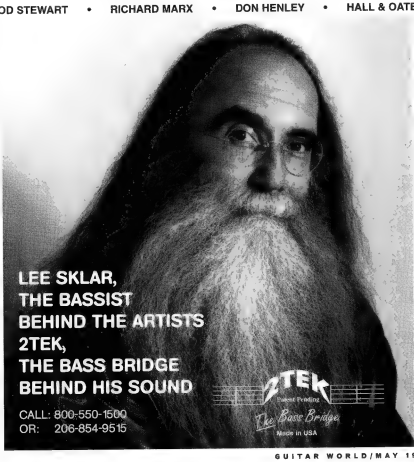

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"They LAUGHED when I said they could have Perfect Pitch ...until I showed them the secret!"

The TRUE STORY
by David L. Burge

IT ALL STARTED in ninth grade as a sort of teenage rivalry.

I would practice the piano for five hours daily. Linda didn't practice anywhere near that amount. But somehow she always seemed to have an edge which made *her* the star performer of our school. It was frustrating.

What does she have that I don't? I would wonder.

Linda's best friend, Sheryl, sensed my growing competition. One day she bragged on and on about Linda, adding more fuel to my fire. "You could *never* be as good as *Linda*," she taunted. "*Linda's* got *Perfect Pitch*."

"What's Perfect Pitch?" I asked.

Sheryl gloated over a few of Linda's uncanny musical abilities: how she could name any tone or chord — *just by ear*; how she could sing any pitch she wanted — *from mere memory*; and how she could even play songs after only *listening* to them on the radio!

My heart sank. *Her fantastic EAR is the key to her success* I thought. How could I ever hope to compete with her?

But later I doubted Sheryl's story. How could anyone *possibly* know F♯ or B♭ just by *listening*? An ear like that would give someone a mastery of the entire musical language!

It bothered me. Did Linda *really* have Perfect Pitch? I finally got up the nerve and point-blank asked Linda if the rumors were true.

"Yes," she nodded to me aloofly.

But Perfect Pitch was too good to believe. I rudely pressed, "Can I test you sometime?"

"OK," she replied cheerfully.

Now I couldn't wait to make her eat her words...

My plan was ingeniously simple:

I picked a moment when Linda least suspected it. Then I boldly challenged her to name tones for me — *by ear*.

I made sure she had not been playing any music. I made her stand so she could not see the piano keyboard. I made certain other classmates could not help her. I got everything just right so I could expose Linda's Perfect Pitch claims as a ridiculous joke.

Nervously, I plotted my testing strategy. Linda appeared serene.

With silent apprehension I selected a tone to play. (She'll *never* guess F♯!)

I had barely touched the key.

"F♯," she said.

I was astonished.

I quickly played another tone. She didn't even stop to think. *Instantly* she announced the correct pitch.

Frantically, I played more and more tones, here and there on the keyboard, but each time she knew the pitch — without effort. She was SO amazing — she could actually identify tones as easily as *colors!*

"Sing an E♭," I demanded, determined to mess her up.

With a bare pause she sang the proper pitch. I had her sing more tones (trying hard to make them increasingly difficult), but still she sang each one perfectly on pitch.

I was totally boggled. *"How in the world do you do it?"* I blurted.

"I don't know," she sighed. And to my great dismay, that was as much as I could get out of her!

The dazzle of Perfect Pitch hit me hard. My head was dizzy with disbelief, yet from that moment on I knew that Perfect Pitch is real.

"How in the world do you do it?" I blurted. I was totally boggled.

I couldn't figure it out...

"How does she DO it?" I kept asking myself. On the other hand, why doesn't *everyone* know musical tones by ear?

Then it dawned on me that *most musicians* can't tell C from C♯, or A major from F major — like artists who brush painting after painting without ever knowing green from turquoise. It all seemed so odd and contradictory. I found myself even more mystified than before.

Humiliated and puzzled, I went home to work on this problem. At age 14, this was a hard nut to crack.

You can be sure I tried it myself. I would sweet-talk my brothers and sisters into playing tones for me so I could guess each pitch by ear. My many attempts were dismal failures.

So I tried playing the tones over and over in order to memorize them. I tried to feel the "highness" or "lowness" of each pitch. I tried day after day to learn and absorb those elusive tones. But nothing worked. I simply could *not* recognize the pitches by ear.

After weeks in vain, I finally gave up. Linda's gift was indeed extraordinary. But for me, it was out of reach.

Then came the realization:

It was like a miracle. A twist of fate. Like finding the lost Holy Grail.

Once I had stopped *straining* my ear, I started to listen NATURALLY. Then the incredible secret to Perfect Pitch jumped right into my lap.

I began to notice faint "colors" within the tones. Not *visual* colors, but colors of *pitch*, colors of *sound*. They had always been there. But this was the first time I had ever "let go" — and *listened* — to discover these subtle differences within the musical tones.

Soon I too could recognize the tones by ear! It was simple. I could hear how F♯ sounds one way, while B♭ has a different pitch color sound — sort of like "listening" to red and blue!

The realization hit me: THIS IS PERFECT PITCH! This is how Bach, Beethoven and Mozart could mentally envision their masterpieces — and identify tones, chords and keys just by ear — *by tuning in to these pitch colors within the tones.*

It was almost childish — I felt sure that *anyone* could unlock their own Perfect Pitch by learning this simple secret of "color hearing."

So I told my best friend Ann (a flutist) that *she* could have Perfect Pitch too. She *laughed* at me.

"You have to be *born* with Perfect Pitch," she asserted.

"You don't understand how *easy* Perfect Pitch really is," I explained.

I showed her how to listen. Timidly, she confessed that she too could hear the pitch colors. Soon afterwards, it was clear that Ann had *also* gained Perfect Pitch! We became instant school celebrities. Classmates enjoyed testing us in amazement. Everyone was awed by the power of our virtuoso ears.

Way back then I did not know the impact I would have as I would later explain my discovery to college music professors. I was surprised that many of them *laughed* at me at first. You may have guessed it — they told me you have to be *born* with Perfect Pitch. Yet once I revealed the simple *secret* to Perfect Pitch — *and they heard for themselves* — you'd be surprised how fast they would change their tune!

As I continued with my own music studies, my Perfect Pitch ear allowed me to progress far faster than I ever thought possible. I even *skipped over* two required college courses. Perfect Pitch made *everything* much easier — performing, composing, arranging, sight-reading, transposing, improvising — and it enhanced my *enjoyment* of music as well! I learned that music is definitely a HEARING art.

And as for Linda?

Oh yes — time eventually found me at the end of my senior year of high school. I was now nearly 18, and it was my *final chance* to outdo Linda. Our local university sponsored a high school music festival each spring; it was my last shot. Guess what? I scored an A+ in the most advanced performance category. Linda only got an A.

Sweet victory was music to my ears — mine at last!

THESE DAYS, thousands of musicians and two university studies have already proven my Perfect Pitch method. *Now I'd like to show YOU how to experience your own Perfect Pitch!*

I hope you won't laugh as you picture *yourself* with various Perfect Pitch skills — like naming tones and chords by ear with laser-like accuracy! I think you will be surprised at just how simple Perfect Pitch really is — *and how very valuable.*

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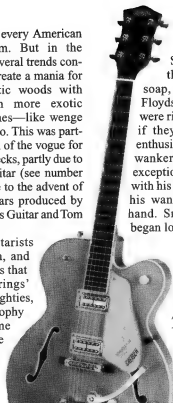
15 YEARS OF GEAR

familiar to every American living room. But in the Eighties, several trends converged to create a mania for exotic woods with even more exotic names—like wenge and pau ferro. This was partly a function of the vogue for replacement bodies and necks, partly due to the rise of the pointy guitar (see number 14, above) and partly due to the advent of designer Strat-style guitars produced by companies like Valley Arts Guitar and Tom Anderson Guitar Works.

In the Seventies guitarists looked for more sustain, and thus for heavier materials that would magnify the strings' vibrations. But in the Eighties, the exact opposite philosophy began taking hold. Some came to believe that the wood shouldn't "interfere" with the strings or the pickups. This outlook gained particular currency among shred guitarists who sought out ultra-light stocks like basswood and swamp ash for their axes. With less sustain, presumably, you could get in more notes per measure. Some of these woods have the consistency of bath soap, which led to a problem: Floyds and other whammy bars were ripped right out of the wood if they were used a little too enthusiastically. Many a would-be wanker with a guitar made of exceptionally light wood was left with his strings hanging limp when his wang bar came loose in his hand. Small wonder that people began looking in the direction of...



15. RETRO

A Blast From The Past

IN ITS MORE EXTREME manifestations, retro is the negation of everything listed above. It is the refuge and creed of those who feel that guitar, amplifier and effects design made a disastrous turn

Continued on page 214

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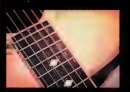
traditional values



Snowflake inlay on bound rosewood fingerboard

The Artwood's signature inlaid headstock logo.

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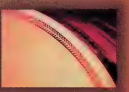

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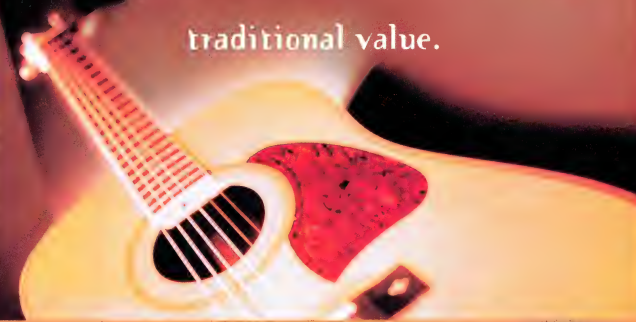

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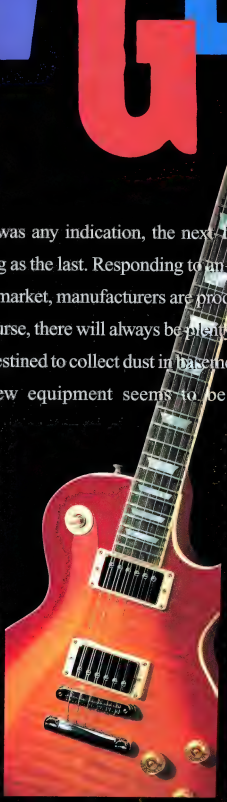
NEW GEAR

IF THE 1995 NAMM show was any indication, the next 15 years in guitar equipment should prove to be as exciting as the last. Responding to an increasingly knowledgeable, demanding and penny-wise market, manufacturers are producing top quality equipment at rock-bottom prices. Of course, there will always be plenty of duds, ugly ducklings and other misguided atrocities destined to collect dust in basements and pawnshop windows, but this year's crop of new equipment seems to be remarkably garbage-free.

High-tech innovations continue to raise their share of eyebrows, but "modern vintage"—coupling classic sounds and styling with modern reliability and versatility—seems to be the central theme among guitar, amp and effects makers. Some companies have gone downright retro, relying on the technology of the past to carry them into the future.



GUITARS

TWANGERS EVERYWHERE WILL want to check out the new, super playable, single cutaway Yamaha Pacifica 102S ($319) and 302S ($449) models. Both guitars feature solid alder bodies and are available in a variety of colors. As with all of Yamaha's guitars and basses, these instruments have a limited lifetime warranty.

Fender introduces the Bonnie Raitt model Strat ($1,499.99). The guitar features a light swamp-ash body, rosewood "special narrow shape" neck and three "Texas Special" pickups. Raitt will donate all royalties from the guitar to the Project, a program designed to give young girls the opportunity to play guitar. In further signature guitar news, Paul Reed Smith and their long-time endorser Carlos Santana have teemed up to produce the Carlos Santana Model ($6,000). This guitar is an exact reproduction of the guitar that Santana has played and loved for years and features a mahogany neck and body with an East Coast maple top. The guitar is available in one color, Santana Yellow, of course.

Always refining their classic designs, Gibson unveils the Les Paul Standard Plus ($2,925), which features the highly figured maple top previously available only on Les Paul Classic models.

Keep an eye out for newcomers Brian Moore Custom Guitars, whose graphite and wood designs seem to be extremely promising.

AMPLIFIERS

PEAVEY INTRODUCES THE Transtube amp line, which employs new, patent-applied-for technology to simulate tube sounds with stunning accuracy. Peavey was also proud to unveil their combo version of the Van

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Halen 5150 series. The new combo ($1,499.99) features 60 watts of tube power and a unique closed-back design.

Crate's 6L6-loaded Blue Voodoo tube amps are available in 60- and 120-watt versions ($800 & $950), and are sure to stand out thanks to their blue covering and red hot tone.

Known for their ubiquitous stacks, Marshall plan to conquer the combo market with their new series of all-tube 30-watt JTM-30 combos. The JTM-30 is available in 1x12 ($799) and 2x10 ($859) configurations. Compatible extension speaker cabinets ($299) are also available for guitarists needing to push a little more air.

EFFECTS

THE HR-GP5 ($695), SONY's new guitar effects processor, featuring twin 18-bit A/D and D/A converters for super-high fidelity, can perform up to seven efects at a time. With four guitar amplifier simulators and four "microphone position" settings, this unit is a direct recording dream that even boasts a built- in tuner.

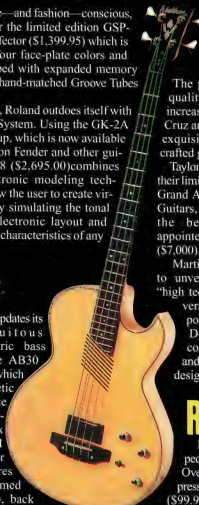
The tone-smiths at Tech 21 introduced their new XXL distortion pedal ($125). Unlike other Tech 21 products like the SansAmp, this unit does not provide amp simulation, but it does boast the new "Warp" control which allows the user to manipulate the harmonic structure of the distortion.

For the tone—and fashion—conscious, Digitech offer the limited edition GSP-2101 multi-effector ($1,399.95) which is available in four face-plate colors and comes equipped with expanded memory and a pair of hand-matched Groove Tubes 12AX7 tubes

Once again, Roland outdoes itself with the V-Guitar System. Using the GK-2A Divided Pickup, which is now available pre-installed on Fender and other guitars, the VG-8 ($2,695.00)combines various electronic modeling techniques to allow the user to create virtual guitars by simulating the tonal properties, electronic layout and amplification characteristics of any rig.

BASS

Washburn updates its now-ubiquitous acoustic/electric bass line with the AB30 ($1,099.90), which adds a magnetic pickup to the standard Fishman Matrix and Equis II preamp. Other AB30 features include a flamed sycamore top, back and sides, an ebonized rosewood fingerboard and computer-designed sound channels.



Gallien Krueger unveiled the mother of all bass amps, the 1000-watt 2000RB ($1,699.00). The amp houses two "professional style" fan-cooled power amplifiers and an updated version of GK's renowned Voicing Filter Section.

With the Basis M-2000 head ($1,395.00), Mesa Boogie maintains their state-of-the-art reputation. The amp boasts tube and "Field Effect" channels which can be combined to create a near-infinite variety of tones.

ACOUSTIC GUITARS

The popularity of hand-crafted, high quality acoustic guitars seems to be increasing as small companies like Santa Cruz and Collings gain notoriety for their exquisite, hand crafted guitars.

Taylor introduces their limited edition Grand Auditorium Guitars, including the beautifully appointed GA-BE ($7,000).

Martin is proud to unveil a new "high technology" version of its popular D-16 Dreadnought. The new D-16T ($1,650.00 case included) is constructed entirely of solid woods and features an extra low-profile neck designed for playability and fast action.

RETRO

DOD is reissuing four of its earliest pedals, the 201 Phasor ($99.95), the 250 Overdrive/Preamp ($89.95), 280 Compressor ($99.95) and 440 Envelope Filter ($99.95). Dunlop introduces two new tremolo effects, the TVP-1 ($216) and TS-1 ($174.99). Electro Harmonix have introduced Russian-made versions of the Big Muff'Pi (approximately $69) and Small Stone (approximately $85) phase shifters. Korg's Toneworks division introduces the new G5 Synth Bass Processor ($450) which simulates vintage analog synth sounds. Phantom have adopted the classic Vox teardrop shape for their instruments. Finally, two classic amp favorites, Hiwatt ($2,099 and up) and Orange ($1,200 and up) are back in the saddle. ●

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Continued from page 208

15 YEARS OF GEAR

up the wrong path at some ill-fated moment in the past. To these people, the retro "movement" is an attempt to steer guitar gear back on the right road.

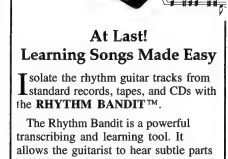
The roots of retro go back to the late-Seventies dawn of punk, when old Sixties Mosrites, Rickenbackers and Fender Jazzmasters began appearing in the hands of guitarists like Johnny Ramone, The Jam's Paul Weller and Television's Tom Verlaine. Punk itself came on the heels of an early-to-mid-Seventies mass-media Fifties revival. (You know, *Happy Days*, *Sha-Na-Na*....) It was the first time that pop culture—rock and roll culture—looked around and said, "What's current is crap. Let's look back." The British Invasion, Sixties garage bands, surf music and Fifties rockabilly seemed to hold the answers—and the gear.

The retro vibe was there throughout the Eighties—"bubbling under," as the expression goes. But it was at the turn of the Nineties—when shred bit the dust and the whole world went grunge—that the trend kicked in with serious force. It has been a boon to companies like Fender, Gibson, Gretsch and Rickenbacker, who have successfully reissued many of their classic designs. It's also been great for outfits like Chandler and Jerry Jones, who began making replicas of old Danelectros, Silvertones and such.

Guitar retro, of course, is as much about tone as it is about style. There's the argument that tube amps, Bigsby tailpieces and old P-90 pickups simply *sound better*. But the perception of sound is a relative thing. Get a time machine, go back to 1972, and capture some guy with elephant bells and a rayon print shirt. Give him a blindfold test, A/B-ing a tube and a transistor amp, and he'll go for the tranny every time.

"Retro," ultimately, is just a form of what is known as classicism. If we still value the form and style of classic rock, then we should also value its tone, and the gear that produced that tone. But healthy classicism is never fanaticism. It can recognize that while Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven are really great, Stravinsky, Stockhausen and Philip Glass aren't exactly dickheads either.

There are signs that retro is already starting to get a bit old. Equipment designers are beginning to camp it up—pink chrome faceplates and red naugahyde padding are starting to crop up. Some of the newer guitar designs look like an attempt to meld retro curves with pointy guitar angles. Will we have to wait until the new century to see something *really* new in guitar equipment? ●



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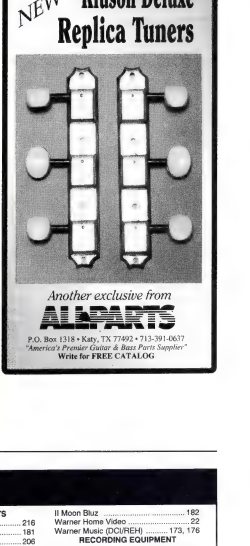

ADVERTISER INDEX

ACCESSORIES
D & D Manufacturing 181
Discount Distributors 188
Groove Tubes/GT Electronics 118
LSR Tuners 204
Lueken Innovations 101, 214
Sabine 31
Sound & Stage 181

AMPLIFIERS
Carvin 194
Crate 21
Fender 60
Gorilla 110
Hughes & Kettner 106
Laney 5
Marshall 108
Mesa Boogie 64
Peavey 7
Rivera 212
Soldano 105
Sovtek/ New Sensor 214
Trace Elliot 219
Tubeworks 196
VHT 80
Washburn 34

EFFECTS
ART 2
Digitech 51, 215
DOD 41
Dunlop 74
E-Bow/Heet Sound 204
Ibanez 67, 69
Lexicon 81
Morley 30
Rocktron 72
Roland 10, 11, 47
Rolls 130
TC Electronic 118
Tech 21 24
Toneworks 220
Yamaha 38
Zoom 127

GUITARS/BASSES
Brian Moore 119
Carmine Street 92
Carvin 194
Charvel/Jackson 66
Cort 122
Epiphone 76
ESP 87
Fernandes 52
Gibson 9, 208
GM Precision 204
Godin 197, 199, 201
Hamer 42, 43
Heritage 219
Ibanez 113, 210
JB Player 48
Martin 37
Paul Reed Smith 84
Rickenbacker 111
Samick 205
Schecter 50
Tobias 63
Washburn 34

OTHER
AHHZ 183
American Mu-Z-Call 181
Concert Connection 208
Concert Express 70, 71
Concrete Marketing 175
Country Guitar Subscription 198
DiscMakers 179
Fender Club 203
GW Subscription 187
GW Sweepstakes 191
The Heavy Bloc 182
The Right Choice 136, 137
Total Media 183
Wild Side Imports 177

PARTS/COMPONENTS
Allparts 216
Parts Express 181
ZTek 206
Warmoth 19

PICKUPS
Actodyne/Lace 46
Bartolini 206
DiMarzio 20
EMG 62
EPM 202
Fishman 93
Seymour Duncan 100, 216
Shadow 19

PUBLICATIONS/RECORDS
Alligator Records 98
AmGems Records 178
American Educational 207
Atlantic Records 85
Bold Strummer 182
Cherry Lane 180
Circumstantial Records 178
Firenze Duomo Records 179
Five Star Music 214
Grubbworm Music 179
Legato Records 181
Legburn Recordings 179
L.I. Research 181
Metal Blade Records 46
Metal Method 209
Metatron 181
MPK Music Sales 89
Music Dispatch 135
Music Vision 181
PLAY KILLER GUITAR 89
Powerhouse Records 178
Ridgerunner Music 183
Roadrock Music 189
Roadrunner Records 190
Rock Performance 80, 81
Screamin' Geetar Records 179
Stefan Grossman 182
Il Moon Bluz 182
Warner Home Video 22
Warner Music (DCI/PREH) 173, 176

RECORDING EQUIPMENT
Tascam 126, 217

RETAILERS
Daddy's Junky 182
Elderly Instruments 182
Guitar Oasis 183
L & M Music 182
Musician's Friend 114, 115
Rhythm City 188
Sam Ash Music 112
Thoroughbred Music 74
Woodwind & Brasswind 122

SCHOOLS
American Institute of Guitar 188
Musician's Institute 6
NGSW 112
Recording Workshop 130

SOUND REINFORCEMENT
Audio Centron 28
Carvin 194
Electrovoice 25
JBL 18
Soundtech 79
Yorkville Sound 104

STRINGS
Charlie Stringer 200
D' Addario 126
Dean Markley 75, 123
DR 88
Ernie Ball 3
GHS 68
SIT 78
Trace Elliot 124

WIRELESS SYSTEMS
Azden 36
Nady 44
Samson 32, 33

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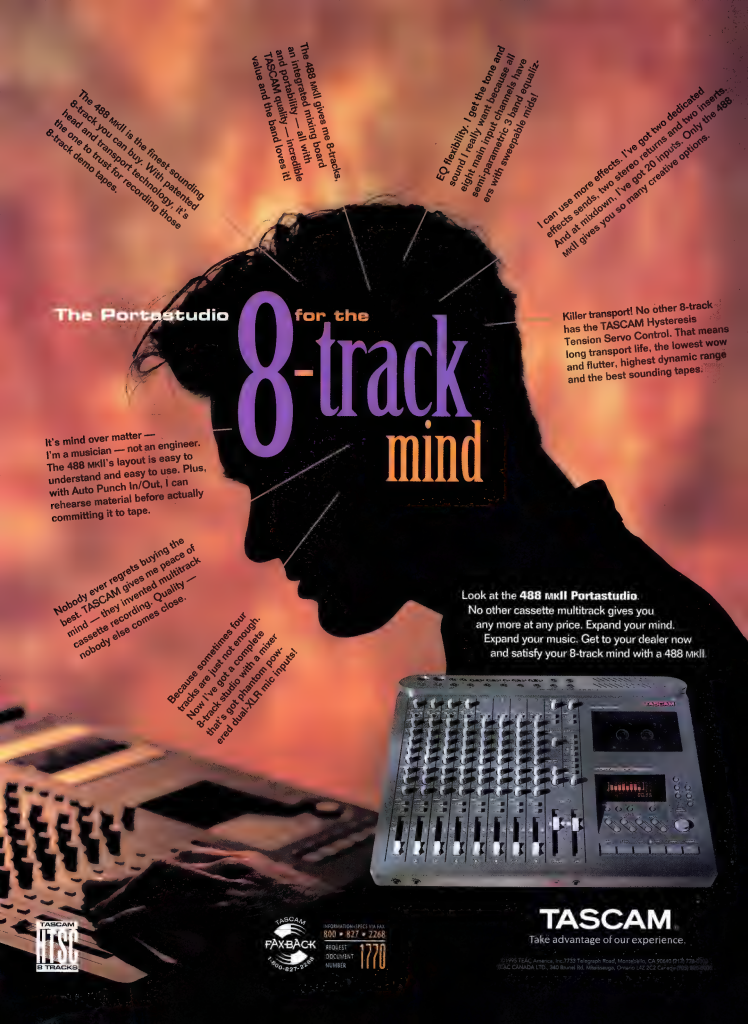
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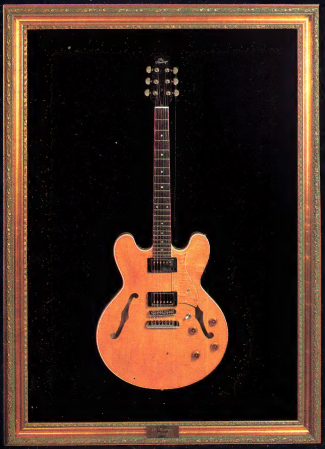

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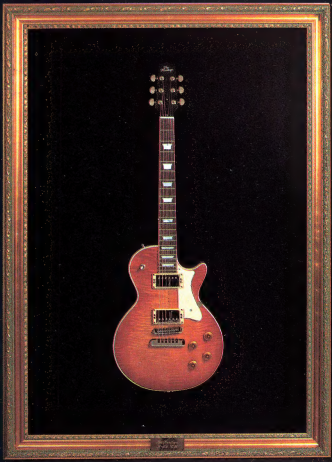

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